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IMAGINATION AND EXPERIENCE: A MASQUE.

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"Mask (*masque*, Fr.), a Cover to Disguise the Face."—Johnson.

IMAGINATION, one of the many children of Love and Wisdom, was despatched to earth by her parents to instruct and elevate into a higher life the races of mankind. On arriving within the sphere of the outer world her quickening spirit became operative there, so that the earth conceived of its own volition a Spirit of an analogous nature, which rising to meet the Goddess, and having no part in her, united itself with her shadow, and followed her whithersoever she went, claiming her name and doing false works therein. The name of this Spirit is Phantasy or Phansie. The outer world being the parent of this Echo, and having thus an affinity and occult sympathy with her, received her always, rejecting Imagination; who, finding that her presence on earth, instead of profiting man with Divine Truth, was only a means of quickening error, obtained permission to return to Heaven; whereupon Phantasy or Phansie, which has no existence save through her quickening presence, passed away likewise with her shadow, and the World was left dead to both.

Imploring of Divine Wisdom succour to fulfil her duties, Imagination was instructed again to return to the Outer World; with a promise that a Helpmeet, born of earth, and therefore in closer present affinity with men than herself, should meet her, and should be ever at hand and at work with her to counteract the operations of Phantasy; which, until the world should be more discriminating, could not fail whenever she was upon the Earth to follow her, as a Shadow, and counterfeit her divine works.

On reaching the sphere of the Earth, the latter proceeded as before to generate its hateful offspring which, rising anew and clothing itself in the shadow of Imagination, recommenced to infest her steps with its loathsome presence. She, however, nowhere encountered the promised Helpmeet, at which she was much disappointed; but she continued, nevertheless, her efforts to elevate and enlighten the minds of men, and perhaps with a little more success than she had enjoyed before. She found it, however, very toilsome and difficult, and she felt sad and solitary.

Occasionally in her journeys up and down the earth—for she found it impossible to remain long in one place—she encountered an old man, who seemed to be wandering about the world as sad and almost as solitary as herself. He seemed worn and weary with work. He was clad in raiment much used, but not in the least worn out; and carried in his hand a scroll, which seemed ever lengthening, and out of which he read aloud, addressing himself to all sorts and conditions of men, though few there were who regarded him. She observed, however, that he was generally well spoken of, while, all the evil works of her attendant shadow being ascribed to her by those who perceived their falsity, she had much ill language of men to put up with and forgive.

What, however, distressed her more than all was, that it was not alone by the foolish and indiscriminating that she was rejected. Large numbers of really sensible and virtuous persons, who were not led astray by her adversary, and whose own works were, in many directions, barren, and in all directions imperfectly fruitful, for want of her, united in repudiating and reviling her. She had not been long enough on earth to know that, in that world, Virtue and Wisdom were not yet married as in Heaven, and that many of its most serious evils are attributable to the well intentioned labours of virtuous men and women of contracted understanding. All this seemed hard to her, and increased her feeling of isolation and her yearning for something to lean upon,—her sense of the need of the Helpmeet which had been promised her. Sometimes

she was inclined to despair, and even to reproach her parents with forgetfulness of her and of the promise they had made her.

As she became more and more despairing of her own work, she took to watching, with a sort of weary interest, the wanderings of the old man, who often seemed to be following, (although in an opposite direction, otherwise, of course, they could not have met), her own footsteps. As has been said, he did not appear to be doing much; but when men did listen to him, she observed it was where she herself had had some slight success, which interested her, and awakened in her a certain interest in him. She also remarked that sometimes when he approached the works which Phantasy had erected in her footsteps and in her name, they vanished as a puff of smoke, while her own works, though few there were, always assumed an aspect of greater healthfulness, beauty and durability whenever he drew near to them.

Of course it did not occur to her, any more than it will to the reader of this narrative, that this dreary personage could be the Helpmeet which her parents had assigned to her, an ever young and blooming goddess; but she was a little humbled by her ill success on earth, being honoured as a Queen in Heaven, was weary of wandering about alone, and was, moreover, interested in the good which appeared to attend his operations. She determined, therefore, to accost him. She was, however, much mortified and displeased when she did so, to find that he made no response, but ignored her presence so completely that she might almost have supposed that he was wholly unconscious of her existence.

She now began to feel that she was really getting out of health. She became sad complexioned; her walk grew heavy and listless; she was scarcely able to rise from the ground, so weak were her pinions; her voice became harsh and discordant; the mirror which she carried ever in her hand, she now found to be clouded and discoloured, and its pictures, as mirrored in the minds of the few whom, here and there, she succeeded in influencing, were so inharmonious and grotesque that she could hardly believe it possible that she could have inspired them. As for her double and shadow of darkness,—Phantasy,—what things *she* produced, under such circumstances, cannot be spoken of; though men called them “works of Imagination,” and believed in them more than ever.

Imagination now perceived that when a goddess loses faith in her divine mission, she gradually becomes no more than a mortal; and, lest this should befall her, and she should lose her crown and all memory of her divine origin, she sought

permission to return to Heaven, which was granted; and, with some difficulty, on a very sluggish wing, she rose into the air and was seen no more.

II.

In the World which lies betwixt Heaven and Earth, there is a land where Men and Gods are permitted to meet, for certain seasons, to enjoy each other's society, and profit by each other's wisdom and experience. For the gods learn wisdom in exploring the minds of men, as men do in examining the ways and methods of the lower creation; and there is, in fact, nothing in the universe of all created things or beings that does not contain, in its incidents and operations, wisdom even for the greatest and highest of them.

Having many friends continually passing to and fro in this region, Imagination determined to make a short stay there to regain her strength, as she found herself, as yet, quite too weak to bear the pure and bracing air of her native heaven. Gradually she regained her health and peace of mind; she became more resigned, and, consequently, more hopeful; and only one thing perplexed and perturbed her, and that was that she had not met with the Helpmeet her parents had promised her. Her thoughts sometimes returned to Earth with a very tender feeling for her disciples upon it; and even the aged man who had treated her so discourteously presented himself sometimes to her memory, without occasioning her either pain or resentment.

It was, therefore, with no feeling of displeasure, though some of surprise, that, walking one day in her garden, she perceived this ancient person making his way slowly and laboriously up the toilsome ascent which led to her palace—she chooses always the high ground for her resting place.—It must be remembered that he had no wings, being only a mortal. He, however, held in his hand a staff of olive wood, entwined with bay, with which, he explained afterwards, he had been presented on entering that mystic region, by a young man who was exercising in a field a horse which, strange to say, had wings; and this staff had proved not only a support to his steps, but actually a perpetual replenishment of his strength whenever he grasped it—a phenomenon which he was quite unable to comprehend. Indeed, without it, it would have been impossible for him to have accomplished his journey. The same young man had taken charge of his scroll, telling him as he had found to be the case, that he would now have no occasion for it. By this relief he had been greatly lightened, though, for a time, he had felt himself embarrassed from having

nothing to refer to for his instruction and guidance. He soon, however, had become aware that this scroll had contained nothing which could have been of the smallest degree serviceable to him for that purpose. The young man, however, had said that the Spirit of the Scroll should always be with him; which, he admitted, he did not understand, not being aware that it had a spirit. Deprived of the guidance afforded him on earth by this scroll, he had, he said, submitted to be guided by Circumstance and Chance, which had led him into the pathway, Imagination observed him to be now ascending.

But this is in anticipation.

After giving directions that the venerable stranger, who had now reached the summit of the hill, and was waiting to be further instructed in the way that he should go by one of the two guides referred to, should be received with every attention and respect; that all things needful for his comfort should be supplied to him; and refreshments of fruit and wine be set before him; Imagination proceeded to array herself in somewhat sombre and sad coloured robes, but, nevertheless, of great richness and beauty, and to set them off with jewels of a dark and deep hue to correspond. Having given to her face the aspect of a grave and dignified matron,—for her powers of transformation are infinite,—she awaited, not without curiosity, in a soberly but richly furnished withdrawing room, the moment when her guest should be ready to be introduced to her.

If she had retained all the higher qualities of her divine nature, unimpaired, or had looked into her magic glass which lay beside her, she would have experienced no surprise when this moment arrived, for it is one of the divine qualities of Imagination, when in a healthy state, to anticipate all things; but she was still in the illness of convalescence; and from the moment when looking down, she had observed the old man coming up the hill, she had become sensible of a drawing towards earth and the things thereof, not unpleasing in itself, indeed, rather the reverse, but still further obscuring the clearness of her inner vision.

The stranger was introduced to her; but what a change was there! The sunken eye, the wrinkled brow, the trembling hand, the slow and uncertain step—where were they! Where, the sad coloured garments worn so long, yet not worn out! Where, in short, was the ancient man! Something of him looked out of the eyes, in which sadness and tenderness seemed now to blend, now to alternate; but this was all. When she had heard his story, she wondered whether it might be the Spirit of the Scroll which the young man had promised

should be always with him that was looking out of his eyes. At present, she understood it not, for she had never seen it in Heaven! She only felt that it had a strange charm for her.

Her visitor accepted with grace and dignity, with perfect ease, and an air of meek surrender that greatly touched her, the seat to which she graciously motioned him near her. She smiled to herself as she perceived how happily she had conformed her dress and appearance to the occasion, forgetting that Imagination will always be in harmony and accord when following its own interior instincts. He appeared to be of about the age which she had herself assumed; and he was attired in the same grave and sober fashion as she was, and only so much less richly as seemed fitly to represent their difference of sex. He too wore jewels, and several orders, which she recognised as of a character given only to persons of distinction in the kingdom of her mother, Wisdom. After receiving his acknowledgments for her gracious hospitality, she expressed the desire, so long pent up in her heart, to know who and what he was, and what were the circumstances which had led him to visit that quarter of the world.

"My name," he replied, "is Experience! I am the reputed son of Time and Care, the Rulers of a sad and gloomy kingdom on the outskirts of this world, of which you, madam, may perhaps have heard, for, with all its gloom and sadness, its name is believed to be written in Heaven. I say the *reputed* son, for though I have no recollection whatever of ever having been young, an ancient woman much valued as an Oracle in that world named Tradition, has assured me that I am of a higher and nobler origin, and that I existed even before either of my reputed parents was born. I have little respect myself for the utterances of this Oracle; and should not now refer to them but for their accordance with certain obscure perceptions and recollections of which I am conscious in my own mind, and my desire, madam, to obey your commands, by giving you all the information in my power, which you desire in regard to myself.

I would not pain you by recounting the various crosses and vexations in life which I experienced, and I may say, by means of which, I arrived at maturity. Suffice it to say, that when that time arrived, I found myself an old man.

"I now became aware, for the first time, that it was my mission in the world to employ myself in bringing to a useful issue the very hard and severe laws imposed upon their subjects by my reputed parents, whose rule, though harsh and despotic, was designed for and capable, under my guidance, of being directed to the most useful and beneficent issues, and of

whom, therefore, I must ever speak with gratitude and respect. This was the more especially my duty, as naturally their kingdom will devolve on me when they shall have passed away.

"Of my wanderings among the inhabitants of that world, in the fulfilment of my mission, I have, alas, little upon which I can presume to congratulate myself. The young, for whom I have ever felt a tender compassion, would not listen to me at all. The middle-aged either received me with dislike and mistrust, or employed my teachings in furtherance of the most foolish and superficial aims. It was, for the most part, only the aged who accepted my instruction with earnestness, just as they were passing out of a condition of life in which alone it could be of service to any person. By those who did receive me, I was for the most part forgotten almost as soon as I had quitted them; and I could never feel the slightest assurance of the durability of any impression which I had made. It is true that I was respected in the abstract, and that everybody spoke well of me; but of what satisfaction was this to me, when my voice was little heeded, and men gave me ever, when I presented myself, the coldest and most ungracious reception.

"If my difficulties had been confined to the inherent personal antipathy to me, and inaptitude to receive my teachings on the part of the people, it would have been distressing enough; but I had to encounter, in addition to this, the opposition, wherever I went, of a dangerous rival and enemy in an Evil Spirit permitted by infinite Wisdom—to what uses it has never been revealed to me—to infest the world, named—Imagination."

At these words, Imagination started and dropped her glass, which her guest picked up and restored to her. In doing so he accidentally looked into it. I do not know what he saw there, but he seemed for a moment confused, and a certain introverted look came into his eyes, as though something had startled him. This momentary intermission in the narrative enabled the Goddess to recover herself. This, then, she said to herself, is the meaning of his having treated me so discourteously when I accosted him. She congratulated herself on having instructed her servants not to reveal her name to the stranger, and she mentally resolved—though she felt a certain pain in doing so, for which she could not account, never having experienced this description of pain before,—not to invite him to prolong his stay with her, as she had intended to do.

As, however, he proceeded with his narrative of the powerful effects upon mankind of this baneful Spirit, her mind

became relieved as she perceived that her visitor was speaking of her evil attendant and double — Phansie or Phantasy, and not of herself; and she wondered that one so wise could be so blind. She did not remember that with all his gifts he was from and of the Earth, and she knew by sad experience how far even the wise of that world are from knowing anything about her. It now occurred to her that the reason he had taken no notice of her when she had addressed him was simply that he had been incapable of perceiving her, or hearing a word that she said, which was in fact the case, as she afterwards learnt.

"Not alone," he continued, "had I to encounter the positive antagonism of this hateful Spirit, but I had the mortification of seeing my best intentions constantly thwarted by a shape as of a ridiculous old man—generated as I believe out of the sluggish and inert atoms of that material world—which contrived to incorporate itself in my shadow, and to impede, in my own name, the operations of every useful work which I undertook. This Spirit, (if I may so call a thing made up of Form) is named Precedent."

Imagination smiled, marvelling at the correspondence between the history of Experience and that of her own life upon Earth.

"At length," he continued, "I began to feel that the distrust which mankind seemed to have of me was extending to me of myself. I began to doubt whether I had really any mission for the good of men, and whether they would not work out their destiny quite as well without me. I was beginning indeed to doubt my own existence, when it was given to me to perceive that I was out of health and required a change. I therefore retired to a hermitage, in the peaceful solitude of which I became sensible for the first time of promptings and impressions within me, such as from my habit of always deriving my guidance from observation of outer things I had never before experienced, or at all events never before observed. These impressions seemed to point to my renewing my wanderings for quite other purposes than those to which I had hitherto directed them, and in quite another direction. Having lost my reliance on myself, and become humbled in so doing, I had no sufficient impulse left to resist these solicitings; and trusting in the higher guidance of the Supreme ruler of all things, I set out on my journey to find the World to which these promptings from within seemed to be directing me. After passing through many dark and devious ways, and being much tormented by the evil Spirit of antagonism, Imagination, of which I have spoken, by which I was frequently led astray, I

found myself in a field where a young man was exercising a horse, which, strange to say, had wings."

This, with the passage before given, completed the narrative of Experience. Whether he was aware of the wonderful change which had taken place in his outward appearance, Imagination could not readily divine. In the conversation which ensued he spoke of the strength which he felt he had gained, notwithstanding the labours of the ascent, as he mounted the hill; and of the invigorating and life-giving quality of the fruits of her garden and the wine of her vintage. There was now and then a look of abstraction in the eyes as though the old man, or perhaps the Spirit of his scroll, were coming to the surface, but this was seldom, and was of brief duration. His deportment continued calm, grave, dignified, and collected; and there was a grace in his manner which Imagination knew was the gift of those only accustomed to mix in the best society. The peculiar expression in his eyes I have noticed; his voice was tenderness itself.

The day drawing to a close, Imagination, whose mind was perturbed, she knew not wherefore, and who was beginning to desire the solitude of her own chamber, rose to withdraw. She begged her guest to entertain himself with whatever diversions her house might afford; and the better to do so she left with him her magic glass, which, she said, she would reclaim of him when they met at a collation, to which she invited his company the following day, in one of the pleasure houses in her garden.

III.

For a short time after the departure of Imagination, Experience stood as one from whom something had withdrawn itself that had become necessary to, if it were not a part of his life, till his eyes suddenly fell on the mirror in his hand. What things he saw there I may not tell. He sought no further for diversion; but far into the night he might have been seen studying it intently, and the more he looked into it, the more strange and wonderful was the change that came over him.

Imagination, in the solitude of her innermost chamber failed altogether to compose the perturbations of her spirit, and it was not until almost sunrise that she obtained any repose. I do not know precisely what was the direction of her thoughts. She once observed to herself "It is a pity he is so old," a remark which, if it related to her guest, would seem to be rather inconsistent, when it is remembered that only a short time before she had been struck with the great improvement

which had taken place in his appearance since she saw him toiling up the hill.

She rose the next morning later than usual (for she is habitually an early riser), refreshed and happy. She had either slept soundly, or the visions of the early morning—which especially belong to her at all times—had been pleasant and propitious. She had no longer any instinct to attire herself in the sad coloured robes which she had worn on the previous day. She commanded her tiring women to bring from her wardrobe—she possesses the most rich and varied wardrobe of all created beings—her attire of a Princess. She had been half disposed to don her regal robes—for everywhere but on earth she owns sovereignty, and is a Queen in her own right,—but moderation and obedience to her instincts prevailed over this desire. When she gazed in the looking glass, she smiled as she thought of the wonder it would occasion her guest to see her face as it really was, and no longer clothed in the lineaments of age which she had now no instinct whatever to assume, but quite the reverse. As a compliment to him she wore, arranged as a coronet round her brow, the jewelled insignia of the orders which she had observed that he bore on his breast, the highest class of each of which she had always possessed, but which, alas, she had never enjoyed the opportunity of wearing on Earth. On her bosom she wore the insignia of a very high order in the kingdom of Divine Love, which had been conferred upon her when she undertook her mission of mercy to Earth. The glory and beauty of this decoration far exceeds those of any other orders or decorations in the universe, and I hardly know how to describe it. It has this property, that it can only be looked upon by the pure of heart, and that those to whom it is permitted to gaze into it, see in it, in shapes and symbols fitted to their highest comprehension, such of the unfathomable mysteries of Divine Love as they may be capable of receiving. It is worn on the bosom, of which it takes the shape, so as it were a breastplate, and has the appearance to the beholder of being constructed of every variety of jewel—all seeming and perhaps being alive. She carried in her hand a fan formed of the feathers of the Phoenix, which it is quite a mistake to term a fabulous bird. Every one of these had also the wonderful property of appearing to the beholder, and, probably, of actually being alive. They were of every variety of hue, arranged in such perfect accord, that though, apparently, ever changing, they were always in harmony. She wore no earrings, such decorations being symbols of servitude, and not known in Heaven; nor did she wear bracelets, those ornaments being symbols of

duty, and only borne, as such, on occasions of state ceremonial, which it was not her instinct to believe that the present was to be. More than this, of what was to happen she did not know, for her insight seemed to have been withdrawn from her, more than ever since she had parted with her mirror, but she was perfectly contented and happy to await the result.

In the meantime, Experience, who had been gazing with wonder and rapture into the magic mirror of Imagination all the night, arose refreshed as from slumber. He accepted, in the spirit of meek surrender to circumstance, which I have noticed as characterising him, and without apparently taking much notice of himself or them, the services of certain personages who were in attendance, as it would seem, to assist in his toilet. It flashed across his mind that they appeared to be rather more richly attired than were the members of the household who had hitherto attended him; and he remarked, but in an unobservant sort of way, that they wore on their breasts a curious decoration, having the appearance of a breast-plate. He, in fact, remained still, more or less, under the influence of the magic mirror; and was indeed not quite sure, until it was placed in his hands by one of these attendants, when his toilet was completed, that he was not still looking into it.

The fresh morning air, however, soon restored him to himself; and, accepting the guidance of one of these personages who walked by his side, or only so slightly in advance as to indicate the right path, and with head uncovered, and followed by the others, he proceeded to pay his duty to the lady of the mansion, at the collation in her pleasure house to which she had so graciously invited him; and whither she was herself, at that moment, proceeding, attended by the ladies of her household.

IV.

Imagination had taken her seat in a beautiful alcove at the end of a walk overlooking a range of terraces, one above the other, which led from her garden and palace by easy gradations to her pleasure house, where she became aware of sweet music as of a triumphal march announcing a procession. She was surprised at this, as she then remembered that she had omitted to command music at her banquet. It seemed as though things were being ordered around her without her knowledge, and she began to realise, though of course she had always admitted it in theory, that even her powers and perceptions were limited, and that she must at times be contented to follow the example of her guest, and leave Circumstance to

direct her—to surrender herself, in short, meekly to the guidance of something more wise and potent than herself. It was in this happy frame of mind that Experience found her. Indeed, though she knew it not, it was his Spirit which had taught her this lesson, the first, but by no means the last, that she was to derive from him.

But what did she find in him? It was indeed well that she had been inspired to don her attire as a Princess, and to put aside from her divine countenance the mask of age; for as a Prince and a Son of the Gods stood he before her. No vestige of age remained with him; his attire corresponded with hers in richness and fashion; and there was life in the jewels which flashed from his breast. She observed also, not without pleasure, that he wore the same colours that she did. The alternations of sadness and tenderness in the eyes alone remained as before. They seemed to her more beautiful than ever. When he paid his respects to her she was a little surprised, not to say mortified, to find that he did not appear to remark the change in her. She did not know how slow is Experience, even when enlightened, to recognise any new aspect of Imagination. He presented his suite, not feeling any embarrassment in doing so at nor knowing who they were, for he seemed to fall into his place, and to do what was seemly and natural in it without effort. He was somewhat surprised, in his turn, at the marked courtesy and even respect with which she received them, and he resolved when opportunity arose to make inquiry who they were, whence they came, and by whom they had been assigned to his service; but this opportunity was not now.

Excusing himself with graceful and deferential courtesy from assuming the place to which she gently motioned him at her side, he seated himself on a cushioned faldstool somewhat lower in height which happened to stand before her, and which, when he did so, she regretted it had not occurred to her to order to be removed. Although she renewed her request that he would take his seat beside her, he could by no means be prevailed upon to do so, which surprised her, as he had shown himself hitherto so ready to be guided and to acquiesce in whatever was proposed to him. The truth was that the perception of her infinite beauty and divine presence was stealing over him. He had begun to feel the sphere of the Goddess, and dimly to perceive that he was in presence of a Power, whose majesty abashed him. Moreover, that feeling of awe with which the ineffable purity of Divine Virginhood affects even the Gods, and which, if not tempered by infinite mercy, would of itself keep any beings

of Earth out of Heaven, was beginning to overpower him, and he was afraid.

Not displeased with the impression which she now perceived she was making on him, Imagination sought nevertheless by all her graciousness—and among the daughters of Heaven there are none more gracious, more easy to be entreated and propitiated than she is—and by cheerful and sweet conversation to make her guest feel at home with her, and remove the feeling of embarrassment which was thus overcoming him. She had partially succeeded when she observed his eyes to fix themselves on her bosom, and she saw that he was gazing on the Oracle of Divine Love which she wore there, and which she knew contained the revelation to him of the mysteries which concerned him. His embarrassment and disquietude so visibly increased that she began to fear whether in his wanderings up and down the Earth, he could have lost the purity needful to all who are to look therein, and her heart sank within her, for she felt that if such were the case she would never be happy again. She did not know that true Experience and Purity of heart are as cause and effect, and that of this divine gift he is the Restorer and not the Destroyer. She was however speedily relieved from this apprehension when gazing on her face, as one awakening from a dream, he threw himself at her feet.

“Oh! most holy and divine lady and mistress,” he said, “how is it possible that I can have been so blind as not to have known thee until now, and the truth concerning thee! Thou but for whose divine ministrations no one of the few human beings who have profited by me, could ever have known me! Thou who art the crown and complement, the only perfect ending, of every work I have conceived! Thou whom I have denied, not knowing thy holy works! Thou whom I have profaned, ascribing to thee the impure works of thine adversary! Thou whom, even in thine own house, led thither by divine mercy to that only end—gifted to see thee and hear thy divine voice, and to gaze into thy magic mirror—I have yet never recognised until now. Oh! mean and ignoble Experience, to fail so long in the only end of thy existence! Pardon thy unworthy servant, oh, most holy one, and receive him into thy gracious favour for such humble work in thy service, if any there be, as he may be fitted to fulfil.”

Imagination now perceived that Experience had been permitted to read, in the divine oracles of Love on her bosom, the mysteries that concerned him, that he knew her, and that what had taken place on Earth, in which she was concerned, was no longer concealed from him. At all this she greatly rejoiced,

and lifted up her heart in thanksgiving. At this moment her own divine instinct was suddenly restored to her, and to her it was given to read, in a flash of light, the mystery which had been only obscurely floating before her during the last days, which concerned them both, and of which she recognised that she was, by divine goodness, to be permitted to be the revealer to him.

Raising him up, she gracefully reminded him that service involved obedience; and that he had not yet assumed the seat at her side which she had assigned to him. He resumed, however, with a gesture of deprecation his old place on the faldstool before her, looking into her eyes, however, with a tender reassurance in his, which made her feel very happy.

"I could almost believe," she observed, "that that evil genius which had caused us both so much disturbance, and which you have so often mistaken for me, must be exercising her baneful influence over you, when you thus so needlessly and unjustly reproach yourself. What have I to forgive that you should not have recognised me whom you had never seen, and thus have been led to confound with my works those of one professing to work in my name. The times and seasons of all knowledge are in the hands of my parents, who give or withhold it as is best both for gods and men. It is the crown and completion of all divine and human labour; for to work in darkness and be rewarded in light is the blessed lot of all created beings. This wisdom," she added tenderly, "I have learnt from you, and how much more the time has not yet arrived for me to reveal to you, or, perhaps, even myself to realise. This, however, I perceive the hour has arrived for me to communicate to you, as it has now been made manifest to me, through you. From my first entry upon Earth, you were my hand and my help. By you the minds of the few who accepted my good works were prepared to receive me; and, if I had observed you, all the futile attempts to infuse myself into human souls not prepared to know me, by the failure of which I have been so much discouraged, would never have been made, because I should have perceived that the time had not yet arrived for essaying them."

As Imagination thus proceeded, it was curious to observe that she seemed to speak with the voice of Experience, losing nothing of her own grace in doing so, but contrariwise, for, as I have said, it was a very tender and loving voice.

"Nor is this all," she continued, "I begin to understand that I was sent down to Earth by my parents for my own instruction as well as for that of men, for I am of a lofty and aspiring spirit, knowing not times and seasons, having been born in

eternity; and had I not learnt to know myself and my own weakness in knowing you, the universe would not have contained me. I now perceive that the aged Earth-woman whom you name Tradition, and the instincts within your own heart of which you told me, have spoken truly; though the memory thereof may have been withdrawn from you. Though born upon Earth of Time and Care, you must have owned existence from very soon after the earliest manifestation of all created things both in Heaven and Earth, and are of the same divine origin as myself. Moreover," she added, smiling with a certain proud tenderness, "look in my glass. None renew their youth but the Immortals."

He did as she bade him. For a moment the introverted look came once more into his eyes as it were the Spirit of the Scroll,—they then seemed to awake as from a dream and it passed away. The combination of sadness and tenderness, which I have before described, remained still as he raised his eyes from the ground and gazed with wonder upon her.

"Take then," she concluded, "the place at my side which belongs to you. My Servant you shall be, since you so will, as I will be yours! my Helpmeet you have ever been, the Husband provided for me from the beginning by our Divine Parents, if you can perceive it so to be, and are willing to accept me for your Wife."

He seemed still too much overcome to speak, but he gently and tenderly kissed her hand and her lips, as he arose and took his seat by her side.

As he did so, the music (which Imagination had *not* commanded) was heard again through the trees. The doors of the banqueting hall, whither the ladies and gentlemen in attendance had been already admitted, opened wide to receive them, and the "banner over them" was LOVE.

It only remains to note that of the marriage of Experience and Imagination was born a daughter partaking the divine and human nature of her parents. Her name is Sympathy and she is the Uniter, because as in her birth the divine and human natures were made one, so in her works were these two natures to be brought together and married in every human being. She is the Messenger from the Heavens to Earth, and from each state or stage of human progress on Earth, to that which is beneath and dependent upon it. In her nature, Imagination operates upon Experience, and Experience on Imagination, and she is the fullest and most blessed external expression that can be given to the union of the two. She interpenetrates all being, and broods as the Comforter over all its conditions. She interchanges the gifts of life and

draws forth from it divine impressions and influences which it could not have generated of itself, and which, in passing through it, permeate its being with the radiance of the Godhead. She is the Ichor of the Gods and the life blood of Humanity, and she and it are the elements of a perpetual Sacrament. She is indeed, in a more interior way, married to it in a divine union, and of the august offspring of the two, the sands of the sea cannot be employed as a comparison for multitude, or the stars of the universe for majesty and divine irradiation. She and her children are Immortals.

OUR EXISTENCE IN ETERNITY.

BY ALEXANDER WILDER, M.D., etc., Professor of Psychological Science
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THE faith in immortality is our noblest possession. It is rooted in the profoundest part of our being. It can never, I think, be quite taken away from us; and I shudder at the wreck which that person would be, intellectually and morally, who really supposed that, at the moment of physical extinction, he would totally cease to exist. We live by the desire to live; by will, thought, virtue, the vital energy imparted by the laws which we obey, and by obeying share their essential life,—in short, by reverence for our own soul.

Goethë has aptly remarked that one who thinks can never quite believe himself likely to become non-existent, ceasing to think and live, so generally and so spontaneously does every one carry in himself the proof of immortality. The soul does not age with the body. We are conscious in the last periods of earthly existence that our highest ideals are still unrealised. I confess, however, that I am not able to demonstrate my immortality by logic and mathematical demonstration. Yet I am positive in the conviction that inability to cast a measuring line over the infinite is no warrant for disbelief in that which is beyond our ken. We can yet expand our scope of intellectual vision, and perhaps develop faculties which we do not now suspect to exist. The child in embryo has lungs, yet does not breathe, and unweaned infants cannot rear their kind. Yet in both are the rudiments of the powers and functions of adult life. I am, therefore, not excluded from the heartiest faith in the Infinite and Eternal, and in my own immortality as a participant in the Divine.

In one of the *Upanishads* it is related that a man having a son who was frivolous and destitute of the sense of wonder,

told him to bring a fruit of the sacred fig-tree. "Break it," said the father; "tell me what you see?" "Only some very small seeds," replied the son. "Break one of them; what do you see in it?" continued the father. "Nothing," answered the other. "My son," said the father, "where you see nothing is a mighty banyan tree!"

The spectacle of immortality is vouchsafed to those who rise above the clouds of the earth, the illusions of the senses, into the abiding reality, the perpetual sunshine above. One needs to outlive egotism, to master passion, to exercise much patience, to love the truth. No running argument can be devised to prove it, for the creations of the human intellect will of necessity fall short of compassing the faculty of the intellect itself. The conviction, the prophecy, the moral consciousness, hovers over the mind; but the evidence is of too pure a nature to be expressed by any form of words. The finite cannot comprehend that which is beyond its dimensions. That which is personal and subjective may not be rendered obvious to another's view and contemplation. It is a knowledge which each person may possess for himself, but cannot impart to another. I am unable to show to another that I suffer pain. He must admit it solely from my testimony and his own cognisance of similar sensations. There must be participation of spiritual life in order to know anything beyond one's own senses. In this way I may know that my conjugal companion loves me, but I am unable, nevertheless, to prove this undeniably by any kind of evidence or reasoning. Yet I am warranted in staking all my earthly future upon the fact. It has been justly affirmed that one must love before he can know that the object is lovely. By a kindred analogy, it behoves us to be immortal in order to be able to perceive our immortality. I do not suggest by this any question in regard to the one who doubts or denies. I only affirm that my own interior consciousness, my supra-consciousness, is abundant assurance for myself. Another may not have matured sufficiently to enable such cognition, or from some other cause his spiritual sense may be dormant. It is not my province to judge him for this. He stands or falls at another tribunal, where both his works and mine must alike abide the test of fire.

Let us rest content in the persuasion that the scope of our understanding embraces only the ideas which it is possible for us to realise. Charles Fourier says beautifully that every desire that God implants in a human soul is the prophecy of its fruition. The wish to live, to know as we are known, is cognate and inborn. It was not engendered in us from the

external world, the maternal imagination, or by instruction from others. It had its origin in the interior soul, and was evolved thence into our consciousness.

I have the conception very distinctly and vividly that I am intrinsically a spiritual essence. It was not so plain formerly when my personality seemed to me to include the whole corporeal structure. As the years accumulate, my body, with all its curious organism, has become somewhat like a thing disjoined and apart from me—as though it was at a little interval away. I contemplate it like any other object. I am not aware of any mental or functional disorder; the mind is clear, the brain apparently normal, and the various parts in their usual health. It appears as a maturing of the psychical entity away from the physical investiture, which has been all along so necessary, and which is yet able to make me keenly awake to the discomforts of cold, pain, and fatigue. The analogy of the wheat would appear to be thus realised. The grassy blade is, for a time, all-important. The stalk in its turn is necessary, and also the ear with its growth of chaff. In due time the blossom appears, and the kernel is evolved. All has taken place for the sake of this. But henceforth the whole stalk, straw, and chaff become superfluous. They belong no more to the newly-formed grain.

It is essential for us to emancipate ourselves from the constraint and limitations of empirical and superficial knowledge in order to learn and attain to the supernal wisdom beyond. The finite cannot comprehend that which exceeds its own dimensions. Many are too apt, for this reason, to give a circumscribed meaning to immortality. They regard life as being purely or chiefly physical; as a mode of existence with corporeal sensibilities. I apprehend that this habit of thinking instigated the conjecture that there can be no soul or intellect except as there exists the brain and bodily organism for its development and maintenance. We may not concede such a magnified importance to corporeal substance. It is proper to regard it conformably to analogies about us. The protoplasm, or initial organism of the scientist, exists as such by virtue of inherent life, and even then it is not of uniform character. There is one protoplasm of the plant and another of the animal, and although every protoplasm may have like chemical constituents, there is a diversity of nature in it according exactly with the differences of kingdom, race, and species. It may be pleaded, however, that we do not perceive aught of this life till we have first obtained the protoplasm. But even then, only the phenomena are witnessed and not the entity which causes them. Consciousness transcends all its manifestations.

Everything which exists has its origin from what is prior to it and beyond. The woody fibre of the tree is derived from the invisible forces and elements in the air. I have seen the statement of a scholar that the coral is supplied with its lime from the atmosphere, and not from the salt water that flows about the reef. I am ready to learn that gold is solidified sunshine attracted and enwombed in a matrix of quartz. All the endless series of material existence is formed of mere Force, and in the last analysis is resolvable into it again. Indeed, matter itself is to us nothing but sense or consciousness, and only then when we are able to discern it. Force, being without dimension, is simply spiritual substance. The properties of matter are manifestations of spirit. It follows, therefore, that when the elements of our corporeal structure which have performed the office of tissue and brain, and thereby been the vehicle of intellect, have been resolved away, our personal and psychical existence must terminate. In fact, this very disintegration is going on constantly. The particles which aforesaid made up our bodies and brains have since bidden us farewell and given place to others. The potency which attracted these elements and forces survives their departure. While they change, it remains and preserves its own identity. It is greater, older, more divine. As the kernel of wheat does not perish when its chaffy envelope bursts and it leaves its receptacle on the stalk, so the personality, the Soul, does not cease to exist when withdrawn from the body.

What then is Life? It is force, or more correctly, a principle which co-ordinates forces. I do not feel satisfied, however, with this definition. It is necessary to go farther. Life is analagous to Light, which is totally invisible to common eyes, and is only perceived after a manner, and in numerous colours, when it has become intermingled with the shade. The human entity is a mixture of a corresponding character, composed of qualities and affections. Love is the inherent essence of vitality, and its energy and intensity are correlate with the tenacity to live. What we usually denominate *sentiments* are so many elements of our life. The moral nature is the substance of our being. We are constituted of our loves, our thought, our virtue, and probity. It is no problem of material and spiritual endowment, but of intrinsic goodness, love of justice, and moral worth. "It is to that sense of immortality with which the affections inspire us," says Henry Thomas Buckle, "that I would appeal for the best proof of a future life."

The basis of immortality is in the human personality itself, the will, mind, and thought. Our souls, thoughts, wishes, and impulses are not accidents of our being, but indeed our very

selves. Goodness, virtue, and all the nobler incentives are not empty and lifeless idealities, but real fact and substance. We do not possess souls; we are souls in very actuality. Man has a mind and spiritual nature capable of evolving the idea and perception of right and wrong. The measure of this is defined by "considering the rights of others," but this external limitation does not create the principle. This has its origin in the mind, and is developed there like the child in the body of the mother. It is no parthogenetic production, but is E-volved because it has been IN-volved.

Immortality is then no boon extended to us on this mundane planet, but comes from beyond the region of the transitional universe. It is a quality of *being* rather than of existence. It was ours from eternity. We do not receive it because it was always an essential of our selfhood. The knowing of it, the cognisance and perception of the infinite Verity, is the eternal life. We thus become awake to the fact that we are citizens of the world beyond. We are made pure and holy by this knowledge. We are enlightened by it, and led intuitively to live and act as immortal beings, putting away from us all conceit and superfluity of evil.

I thus know how to love my neighbour. We are both of divine parentage. He is as my own self, my personality extended to another. We are both included under the same classification, alike in soul, nature, and destiny. Whatever pertains to me generically is also his, and the Superior Power which arranges my conditions has also made the allotment for him, which I must cordially respect. I do not part company with him at the charnel house. We have the criterion of immortality to enlighten us as to what is right. If psychic extinction had been my inevitable doom, I would be a brute with only the ethics of the wild beasts of the forest. They indulge every rapacious inclination with no restraint except that of bodily inability. I would thus be left without incentive or the wisdom which could raise me above their dead level of selfishness and bestiality. There is not room for love and the virtues in a world where there is no faith in immortality. It is love that creates space in human hearts.

- We lose sight of our real selfhood when we recognise no higher motive than selfishness, and suffer the imagination to be led away by sensuous ideas. Death then hangs the heavens with black, and makes itself appear as the only reality. We are like a man having treasures and rich jewels of which he knows not the value. We may abound with every thing that common men prize, but are in reality more needy than Lazarus at the rich man's gate.

The theologist of the Apocalypse has made mention of the other dead, those of diverse character, that lived no more. There are many whom we find still under the dominion of illusion. They appear to have no faculty for the understanding of these matters. It has been somewhat of a study with me whether the something in such persons which came from the Divine returns thither without identity, as the rain-drop merges with the waters of the ocean; or whether it has become individualised, and so will continue. Yet it is apparent to the logical and perceptive intellect, that no capabilities or experiences will ever be in vain. A dormant power may seem to be extinct, and so will abide unperceived till under certain conditions which we do not well understand, it shall be awakened. Any death or apparent extinction of the soul, however complete it may seem, is only relative. There is a resuscitation and deliverance from the lowest hell. I cannot believe that any word or outflow of Divinity will return thither fruitless and abortive. So, too, let me say, that that which dies and perishes is not man. Immortality has nothing to do with the grave, no reference to the dissolving of the bodily substance. It is not a condition to be entered upon and enjoyed only after the phenomenon of corporeal death. Life beyond the grave, which falls short of the true eternity, is a mirage of the imagination.

Our own selfhood as we exist in this mundane region is not the whole of us. Much which pertains to us and is essential is still in the world beyond, and has not been developed in this life. We are differentiated rather than integral, parts rather than an entirety. We receive qualities and additions from others; and in turn those with whom we company, whom we love and esteem, take somewhat away from us. The traits which are peculiar to us are themselves the accidents of individual existence, and often the heir-looms of races and families from which we have descended. We have become, all of us, more or less the continuation and bodying anew of ancestors. The umbilical cord is not really divided, and we are nourished from the life and permeated with the thought of a thousand generations. We are shoots and branches of the great World-Tree, and derive our sap in common from its root.

It is not proper, however, to ascribe all the unexplained operations of the mind to Heredity. Unbodied souls, it may be, get into us betimes when we are not aware. The body which serves as our vehicle from the Foreworld to the Future carries more than a single passenger. Some who have long been dead appear to have a kind of secondary and by no means unconscious life in these very corporeal fabrics which

we suppose to be exclusively our own. John Bunyan represents his Pilgrim as having been infested by a wicked one who whisperingly suggested many grievous blasphemies to him in such a manner that he verily thought that they had proceeded from his own mind. We witness something like this in the mesmeric phenomena, and in the contagious enthusiasm of popular assemblages. It is but a step farther, and hardly that, to acknowledge also the presence and agency of invisible beings. "There are millions of beings in space," says Bulwer-Lytton, "not literally spiritual, for they have all certain forms of matter, that differ widely each from each, in attributes and powers." It is beyond reasonable doubt we are, all of us, surrounded by innumerable entities, bodied and unbodied, capable of transposing their thoughts, impulses, and appetences into us.

I do not see why this declaration should be questioned. I am unable to perceive an endless variety of races of living beings existing in innumerable series and gradations between Man and monads, and then credit the notion that all the way beyond us, clear off into infinity, is a void and eternal blank. Analogy teaches otherwise, and so does my own interior consciousness. I know that there are intelligent entities about me, that are able at times to make me perceive their presence. Sometimes individuals still existing on the earth with me, but who are at a distance from me, so far as physical space is to be taken into the account, exercise a similar power, and I take note of them. I am thus cognisant because of having likewise perceived voices addressing me on occasions of immediate necessity, and noted the actual presence of living essences that were of another mode of existence. I never knew or sought to ascertain who or what they were, nor whether they were persons that had once lived on the earth, or beings always æthereal and preternatural.

It is far wiser and better, according to my present judgment and convictions, to make certain of the Right and True, the immortal facts of all being, than to deluge the thought and imagination with marvels and strange phenomena. The true spirituality consists in being like God, pure and holy through justice, and not in becoming familiar with spectres and the proletaries of the invisible region, or even with angels about his throne.

Of such attainment and experiences with the superior world, it is not well to boast. To see is better than to be seen. Indeed, it is very questionable whether they may, with strict propriety, be mentioned at all. The true wife rejoices in the possession of her husband rather than in the gifts and caresses

which he may bestow; but she speaks of none of them. Greater modesty than this pertains to these interior associations of man and the supernal world. They are to be kept close and sacred from all who have no heart or understanding to appreciate them. But, indeed, it is beyond our power to utter them. They are subjective and interior, supra-conscious facts, known only as we know God, and hence may not be converted into external images for others to contemplate.

Hence, too, we are unable to delineate eternity. We may cognise it, but it is not possible to comprehend it fully. It is above and beyond, as the heaven which transcends and yet contains the earth. It is spiritual and divine; but to define the altitude, the profoundness and extent, is beyond our ken. We are preconscious of it, but may not, in the present condition of our faculties, perceive critically its objective features. We will be wise enough, perhaps, if we do not build our structure of logical deduction upon the foundation of ignorance.

Eternity is in no essential sense a Foreworld or Future. It is purely the unconditioned, that which always is. The soul is mature there, and is manifested elsewhere by shutting itself away, so to speak, from that mode of being, as we shut ourselves away from every-day life in going to sleep. It then passes into the transitional condition, or from being permanent becomes subject to change, from being integral it is now divided into qualities and faculties, from being eternal it becomes a thing of time. Hence evil, the privation of good, and the contingencies of phenomenal existence, become incident to it. Thus the corporeal environment and its attendant conditions, which it inherits in the world of nature, are as death and the grave, and hell within them, to the real entity of our life.

This is not, however, any hopeless gulf of destruction. The soul, thus enveloped and enthralled by the pains and pleasures of the body, is in a maimed and broken condition, and in a manner alienated from its divine source. Its interior rational principle is asleep. It does not, however, entirely forget. Our *ego*, that which we are, is farther beyond, immortal and imperishable. We have a supra-consciousness, a soul-sense, transcending all sense-perception, which awakes from its dormant condition, as if in order to remind us, that such as we intrinsically are, we have been for ages. Our every conception of the Good and True pertains to these former experiences. These memories, now and then awakening, have often the peculiar vividness of present occurring. When we enter into communion with a superior mind, we perceive ourselves somehow passing beyond limitations, and after a

manner coming into the All. We apprehend in a degree where we belong. We have a deeper sense and consciousness of Real Being. We become more cognisant of the eternal laws and reasons of things which are behind, as well as mingled with the endless diversity of sensible phenomena. We feel the Highest to be the nearest,—to be closer to us than the air which we breathe, or the thoughts which we are thinking. Aye, for our real personality is in God; our individuality pertains to our own condition.

It may seem a matter of wonderment to many, that if we have our origin in eternity, we do not seem distinctly to remember it. I have already remarked that the soul, when entering the transitional condition, was as though asleep. Whether we ever existed aforetime among men is not certainly known to us. Several of the old-time philosophers, it is true, have asserted that they could recall to memory facts of such existing. These things may be verities, and I am disposed to regard them as such. I am conscious, however, that some who affirm such things, are likely to change them into falsities by their own uttering of them. It is necessary for a person to be true himself, in order that his speech may be true. Though it be an actual fact that I have existed before, and even repeated times in this mundane sphere, yet those who bear witness to it may be perjured. The Apostle Paul describes a twofold ministry, one of death and condemnation, and the other of the spirit that makes alive. A similar analogy and double character pertain to this matter of our existence in the eternal world, and our appearing in the earth. It is requisite to speak the truth with pure lips, lest it be turned into a lie, and made the instrument of injustice, wickedness, and cruelty.

This twofold state of being is exemplified in our modes of thought. What we denominate reasoning is the conscious endeavour of the understanding to trace our facts, their relations and analogies. Its successful performance is very closely allied to corporeal conditions, the health of the body, the tone of the nervous system, and the previous culture and discipline of the mental faculties. Beyond this region of our intellect is another, which is more occult. It has been represented as a form of cerebration or brain-action, of which we are at the time unconscious, but is, nevertheless, exactly complementary with the sense-perception. However intelligent and even exalted it may seem, they insist that the activity is from some objective cause, and not intuitional. In this way they explain the common occurrence of everybody's experience, that we lose track of an idea or chain of reasoning, when the external consciousness has become wearied, and we appear

incapable of treating it; and lo! hours, days, or even longer periods afterward, perhaps in a dream or reverie, or even when we are engaged at something entirely remote from the subject, the solution will become vivid in the mind like a special suggestion.

I must unqualifiedly reject this conjecture as inadequate in regard to accounting for the actual facts. Brain-matter is only a certain aggregation of potential force, and is set in action only by mental causation. The mind is energy which sets it at work, and the director of its operations. Sensation, or consciousness, being material, is its lowest mode of manifestation. Indeed, if the brain acts when we are not conscious that we are thinking, it may have done so in our infancy, or before we were born. This, of course, would not be acknowledged; yet we have innumerable ideas of mental suggestions which are not explained by this theory. I have known an infant exhibit terror at the apprehension of falling, that never had had a fall. I have myself been prompted and warned when I had not given any thought to the presence or possibility of danger. I have delivered addresses, to public audiences, when no thought or "cerebration" had been bestowed, and what I said was perfectly new to myself. I have never had occasion afterward to correct the matter that had been so uttered, as would have been probable, if it had taken form, however unconsciously, from my own convictions, knowledge, or opinions. Other witnesses can testify to similar things. There is an ocean of thought about us, living and electric, which unites individual minds to each other, and makes persons in peculiar conditions of exertion receptive of ideas and argument which are in no sense original to them. Such cerebration pertains to the Great Universal Brain, which the New Testament aptly denominates the Holy Spirit.

I am, therefore, convinced that what is known as intuition, insight, inspiration, is supra-conscious intelligence. It is a remembering, the reproducing and bringing to consciousness of what we knew and possessed in the foreworld. It is at the very core of our being. It belongs to that sphere of life to which we have become, after a manner, forgetful and alien. There can be no organic activity without it, any more than there can be muscular action without the direction of the will. As the soul and thought are antecedent to sensation, this intuitive thought is necessarily not perceived by the consciousness. It has little to do with brain matter, and does not oxidise or wear away its tissues. The person who is thus intuitive is strengthened and not wearied with it.

The forgetting which has been mentioned, is a condition

antecedent to our entering upon the present mode of mundane life. In like manner, children forget the scenes and experiences of early infancy, and if torn away from their parents, become totally ignorant of them. Souls shut out from the eternal form of being and prisoned in this world of physical sense, may cease to know about that life, and so be in a manner dead to it.

This exile and death, however, do not constitute an absolute or actual separation from the eternal world. The interior soul, which was generated in eternity, still lives from its divine source. It is a projection or outcome from the Divinity and not a parentless evolution of the physical nature. Our existence in the material universe is the result of causes which we are hardly sufficient to comprehend. It may have been in order to perfect our individuality, and, therefore, be the essential means to establish our selfhood in distinct identity. It is certainly necessary to us for a season, and has its uses which we may not safely forego. We may bear in mind, likewise, that it is the occupancy of a sphere of being rather than the mode of existing in it. We are really in it, therefore, before our birth or even our conception, and do not leave it by virtue of the dissolving of the body. It is not enough that we seem by this event to forsake material existence. The condition must also be exceeded which has allied us to it. Otherwise, like a weed cut off by the hoe in one place, we will be likely to come forth in another.

On the other hand, it is not required to die in order to become free from the conditions of the material existence. Our existence in the eternal world is not absolutely incompatible with our abiding on the earth. The soul may turn again toward its celestial beginning, contemplate it, and be at one with it, and so spiritual and divine, as partaking of Deity. Love of goodness, enthusiasm for the right, unselfish motive and conduct are the elements of perennial growth, and exceed the limitations of time. Whoever exercises them without fault, is already beyond the cosmical universe—a son of God dwelling in eternity.

The whole matter transcends the sphere of common argument. It belongs to the universal faith, which has been cherished alike by seers and sages. It pertains to the world of ideas, the prior realities which came with the spirit from its divine home. We may act as guides and heralds to point out the way to the eternal verities. Beyond that, however, each must minister to himself. The Truth, and not its exponent, will make us feel. That freedom will have no limit. It is no mere breaking of yokes and fetters, as may be

hastily imagined, but an initiation and induction into the fulness of life and knowledge. Herein is immortality, being without change or condition, participation of the absolute good. Eternity itself.

GHOSTLY VISITORS:

A SERIES OF AUTHENTIC NARRATIVES.*

By "SPECTRE STRICKEN."

(Continued from Vol. IV., page 406.)

THE GHOST DRESSED IN BLUE.

"In the summer of 18—, a Mrs. Cavendish, an intimate friend of ours, gave up her town house on account of her health, and went to live at one of our numerous sea-side resorts. The villa she fixed upon was a newly built one—indeed, she bought it before it was finished, and had it completed in accordance with her own taste.

"This last spring, being obliged to go abroad with an invalid relation, Mrs. Cavendish told my mother she should be delighted were she and my sisters to take up their abode at her marine residence, as she laughingly termed it, during her absence. My mother gratefully accepted this kind offer; my

* The subjoined series of Ghost Stories was placed in my hands some short time ago by the compiler, with the request that I would pronounce an opinion on the advisability of publishing them. Before I could offer any advice, it was necessary to arrive at some conclusion as to their authenticity. It is very easy to fabricate out of the imagination a series of stories that shall beat facts out of the field. Such Christmas food is amusing, but valueless for any purpose beyond. I set myself, therefore, to inquire whether the stories were fiction, or records of fact. I found that they are authentic records of actual fact, and I have in my possession the key to the various stories, with the full names of the persons who figure there under initials, or with some disguise.

It is a matter of regret that such narratives cannot be printed with full names, and due attestation. But no one will be surprised that people should shrink from such publicity, if only to avoid the annoyance that would assuredly come upon them from mere impertinent curiosity.

It has seemed to me that such records as these have a value that warrants their publication. They will, therefore, by the permission of the Editor, be published in the *Psychological Review*, and afterwards will be put forth in a more permanent form.

It is obviously impossible to publish the evidence which guarantees the authenticity of these stories. I have thought, therefore, that an assurance that they are what they pretend to be, authentic records of actual facts, given by one who has concerned himself much with such things, might remove possible misconception. For this reason I take on myself to say these few introductory words.—M. A. (Oxon).

youngest sister had been delicate for some time past, and she thought the sea air would do her good. Shortly after my relatives set off in high glee for Heathcote Villa. They were charmed with it, they wrote me on their arrival. It was delightfully situated; had an extensive view from its windows, and was deliciously cosy and comfortable in its interior arrangements. I was then in Switzerland, and naturally expected they would remain at Heathcote Villa for a couple of months or so; imagine my surprise, therefore, when, three weeks after, I received a hurried note from my eldest sister, Emily, telling me of their return home. 'You shall know *all* when you come back to us,' formed the postscript. This mysterious sentence so excited my curiosity that one of the first questions I asked on my arrival was, 'Now, what about Heathcote Villa?'

"My mother looked at Emily, and said, 'You had better tell William all about it, as you saw the woman.'

"After a momentary hesitation, Emily said:—

You will laugh at me, William, but twice during the first week of our stay, I met a tall woman in a blue dress. She came out of the bedroom on the first floor, and went through a doorway on the stairs which led to the attics. At first I took her for a maid of Mrs. Cavendish's whom she had left behind, and never thought of speaking of her to any of the others. The second time, however, struck with a something peculiar about her, on my return to the parlour I mentioned the circumstance, speaking of her as Mrs. Cavendish's servant.

"Neither of her maids are here," said mama; "one is abroad with her, and the other two went to their homes for a holiday; she told me so herself."

"Then she must be a friend of our servants'. I shall ring and enquire."

When Mary came mama asked her who it was I had seen. The maid looked surprised, and said she did not know who it could be.

"She is a tall woman, and wears a blue dress."

Mary assured us she had never seen any such person in the house, and she was sure Bella had not, but she should ask her. She left the room, and on her return said that the other knew nothing about her.

"Who can she be?" said mama, after Mary had gone; "can any one have got into the house? or is she some person in the neighbourhood who was in the habit of coming here when Mrs. Cavendish was at home, and is not aware of her absence?"

"That is not at all probable," I remarked.

"Not very, I must say; but the next time you see the woman you must speak to her."

Mrs. Cavendish having told us that we might invite any friends we chose to Heathcote Villa, mama asked the Nortons to spend a few days with us, which they did. Like ourselves they were delighted with the house, and expressed their satisfaction with their bedroom, the large one on the first floor.

When they joined us at the breakfast table on the morning after their arrival, we remarked that they both looked pale and thoughtful.

That night none of us got any sleep for the opening and shutting of doors, and footsteps in the hall. We fancied too that we heard voices. The next morning Mr. Norton looked haggard and uncomfortable.

Mrs. Norton was not well, he said, and would have her breakfast in bed. Neither of them had had a good night. He hoped we had not been disturbed, as he and Mary, not being able to sleep, had walked about the hall for some little time. We expressed our regret at this, and then there followed several leading questions from Mr. Norton—Had any of us slept in the room they occupied? Had any other of our friends slept in it? Who did the house belong to? Did we know anything of its past history? etc., etc.

"From your looks and these enquiries," said mama, "I am sure you have something to tell us about your room, do let us know what it is."

Mr. Norton then gave us an account of their experiences, and certainly they were very dreadful.

"The noises," he said, "began the night before last, and immediately on our putting out the candle. These consisted of loud knockings at different parts of the room, accompanied with heavy footsteps and whispering voices. We naturally concluded that some one was there, and I got up and lit a night light but could see no one. I was scarcely in bed before the light went out. I rose and lit another, for, strange to say, all the wax of the first had melted away. The second shared the same fate, and again the noises and whisperings made themselves heard. This went on all night, and neither myself nor my wife could sleep in consequence. Fearing you would only laugh at us were we to say anything about it, we resolved to wait and see what of peace and rest another night would bring us. Of these we had neither. The noises were simply dreadful. There were loud knockings on the walls, runnings to and fro, and this time the whispering voices seemed to be close to us, though we could not hear what was said: keys were also jingled in our ears, and a pistol was fired off. Night lights

were lit one after the other, but went immediately out, and again the wax was found to have disappeared. 'Try a candle,' suggested my wife. I lighted one. The instant after we were in darkness, and subjected to a renewal of these horrid experiences and others of a worse nature. Hands tugged at our clothes, and wandered over our faces. At another time my wife was lifted up and then thrown down with considerable violence. We really could endure such horrors no longer, so we left the room and walked about the hall. This morning both my wife and myself feel quite nervous and ill owing to these hauntings."

We expressed our sorrow that he and Mrs. Norton had been made so uncomfortable, and another room was given them. In this they slept undisturbed during the remainder of their stay.

On their departure Rose Vane came to us.

"What bedroom is she to have?" I asked mama.

"The one down stairs; it is much the nicest."

"But what of the ghosts?"

"My dear, there are no such things."

Miss Vane arrived bright with youth and high spirits. At the breakfast table next morning she appeared looking really ghastly.

"Rose!" we all cried in the same breath.

She smiled a haggard smile. "O, Mrs. Oxenford, what a horrible room that is you have given me! I never slept owing to the incessant noises and whisperings that were going on around me. I lit my taper, but, to my consternation, it went out immediately. I tried another and another but with the same results, and the wax of each disappeared as soon as the light went out."

"My dear child! how distressed I am that you should have suffered so; you should at once have come to me."

"I could not move," said poor Rose with a nervous shudder, "I could only lie still and listen."

Again the woman in blue passed me on the stairs. As formerly, she came out of *that* room.

Pale and trembling I ran back into the parlour. "Mama," I said, "I am convinced there is something dreadful about this house—I have just seen the strange woman—do let us get away from it!"

'Not for worlds would I stay here any longer. Could Mrs. Cavendish have known of all this, when she asked us to come? I cannot think so.'

That evening we returned to town. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Cavendish came to see us. Her relative was dead, and she had no longer any inducement to remain away.

Mama told her of the Nortons and Miss Vane's experiences, and asked if there was anything strange about the bedroom on the first floor. She admitted that there was, but would enter into no particulars. All we could ever learn respecting Heathcote Villa was that at the time of its being built, some rather curious people went in and out of the house. Our own impression is that a woman was murdered in that room."

It was universally admitted that experiences such as these could not well be explained away; also, that this story was one of the most singular we had ever heard.

"Can either of you give us one equally strange?" said Weston, looking towards some Oriel men who had hitherto kept silent.

"I can," said Willoughby.

"Bravo!" we shouted.

"You must accompany me to India—in thought only (seeing that we all looked surprised)—the incidents I am about to relate having taken place there.

THE AYAH'S GHOST.

One day while General Davenport (real name suppressed, of course) and his lady were out driving in the ——— district, the latter's attention was attracted by an Ayah whom she saw before her on the road. Although dressed in female attire, in appearance and walk this figure bore a much greater resemblance to a man. Her movements too excited not only surprise, but alarm lest she should get run over. She walked along with rapid strides, occasionally darting into the middle of the road; then crossing and re-crossing, each time keeping so close to the carriage, that Mrs. Davenport begged of her husband to be careful otherwise he would run over her.

"Run over who?"

"The Ayah."

"The Ayah!—where is she?"

"There, just before us."

"I don't see any one."

"Why, bless me! she is just in front of the horses' heads: now, she's on the path—now crossing the road—oh! *do* be careful, Charles—the fool! she must be mad! Good Heavens! she is under the horses' feet!"

General Davenport at once pulled up, threw the reins to his wife, and jumped down to extricate the Ayah from her perilous position, but no Ayah was there. He looked before him, behind him, and on all sides, but no such person was there. He told his wife so; adding, that she must have imagined it.

"Charles, Charles, don't be so foolish," said Mrs. Davenport; "I saw the woman as distinctly as I see you—I declare that I did."

Observing that she was becoming quite hysterical, the General forbore further comment on what appeared to him to be a complete delusion, but remounting the box, he took the reins, and drove on towards their destination.

Dating from that day Mrs. Davenport was haunted by the Ayah. Were she going up stairs the Ayah was coming down; were she descending, the latter was ascending. Did she go into the drawing-room the Ayah was coming out of it. On entering her bedroom the tall Indian came forth from behind the curtains, and glided past her. If she went into the verandah, the same white swathed figure rose from the seat she was about to occupy. So frequent became these dreadful visitations that the poor lady's health gave way under them; and her husband at length resolved to bring her and her daughter, then a girl of sixteen, home to England. Obtaining leave of absence he brought them away from — in the autumn of 18—. Once on board ship, the Ayah seemed to have ceased her visits until one day when in the Red Sea, she swept past Mrs. Davenport as she was walking on the deck with her husband. With a faint scream, Mrs. Davenport grasped hold of the General's arm.

"What is it you see?" he said, alarmed by her pale face and excited eyes.

"The Ayah!" she gasped, "there! there!" but neither her husband nor her daughter saw anything in the direction in which she pointed. Again the dreaded visitor renewed her persecutions. In her cabin, on the steps, on deck, wherever she was, Mrs. Davenport was hourly confronted by the tall ungainly Ayah in her sweeping robes.

"Am I always to be haunted thus?" moaned the unhappy lady.

One evening however, to her great joy, the Ayah rustled past her, and leaping over the side of the ship, was engulfed in the waves, and she saw her no more throughout the voyage.

When landed in England General Davenport consulted the most eminent of the London medical men about his wife's now shattered health, giving full particulars of her hallucinations, as he supposed them to be.

From the altitude of their sublime elevation the most distinguished of these smiled down in lofty contempt upon poor Mrs. Davenport and her so styled delusions.

"Is Mrs. Davenport a spiritualist?" asked Dr. C——.

"No."

"Ha! you surprise me! Then does she take any prominent part in this forward movement amongst women, and thereby over excited her brain?"

"What do you mean?"

"Does she go in for woman's rights or this most lamentable anti-vivisection crusade?"

"Mrs. Davenport hates cruelty in *every* shape, as I do myself," said the General stiffly.

The doctor threw up his eyes with a deprecating gesture; and having found (so he said) the key to Mrs. Davenport's indisposition, he advised avoidance of *all exciting topics*.

The poor General after having gone the round of the more famous medico-physiologists, returned home with the following prescriptions:

No. 1.—"Stimulants in moderation: chloral at nights if restless."

No. 2.—"Avoid everything in the shape of stimulants and narcotics."

No. 3.—"Gentle exercise on horseback. Must not fatigue yourself."

No. 4.—"Walk six miles a day, and drink a glass of cold water before each meal."

No. 5.—"Eat sparingly of vegetables, and take frequent shower-baths."

No. 6.—"Generous diet; meat twice a day, and a tumbler of champagne after each meal; these hallucinations generally caused by a depressed nervous system."

No. 7.—"Avoid butcher-meat, and drink four glasses daily of some light wine advertised as being highly recommended by the medical faculty."

"What am I to do?" said General Davenport to a sympathising friend, "I am told that these are the only men on whose judgment one can with safety rely—in fact the heads of the profession; and see, each of them gives different advice. What faith can one have in such people?"

"Doctors differ and patients die," laughed his friend, "but consult Dr. —, he is a sensible man, thinks less of the advancement of science than of his patients' welfare. I am sure he will be able to do your poor lady good."

The General at once sent for Dr. —

Dr. — did not laugh when Mrs. Davenport explained her case; on the contrary he looked very grave.

"You must instantly set off for the German baths," he said; "take them frequently; and should the figure appear to you again, speak to it, otherwise it may do you an injury. I have had several patients from the same part of India as that in

which you resided, who complained of similar persecutions. They followed my advice and were cured; so remember that you speak to it."

Immediately on her arrival in Germany, Mrs. Davenport was again haunted by the Ayah, and so restless and miserable were her nights in consequence that the General took refuge in his daughter's room, while she went to sleep with her mother.

One night, the girl told me she was awakened from sleep by a loud shriek. She turned towards her mother to see what the matter was, and to her horror she saw an Ayah with a most diabolical looking face bending over her. The creature had its hands under her and was raising her up. At this Miss Davenport also screamed loudly.

"In God's name, let me go!" cried Mrs. Davenport. At these words, the Ayah with a hideous grin, threw her on the floor and disappeared.

Hearing their cries General Davenport rushed in and raised his wife who was then in a swoon.

"What has happened?" he said to his daughter. She described what had taken place.

"And oh, Charles, I shall never—never forget what I suffered," said Mrs. Davenport, on recovering from her faint, "when I looked up and saw that awful dark face, with its terrible eyes glaring down upon me, and felt those bony fingers pressing my back! Dr. —'s advice saved me. Had I not spoken to it the creature would have killed me."

From that day she never saw it again.

Not long afterwards the General was told by a friend who had been formerly a resident at —, that that district was inhabited by devil worshippers.

"Very singular things happen in India," said Selby, as Willoughby finished his thrilling tale. "At some military station out there Colonel and Mrs. — gave a regimental dinner. Amongst the guests were a Major Sullivan and a Lieutenant Montague. These gentlemen sat next each other, and the Major was very much annoyed to see his companion suddenly start and fix his eyes on the hostess, with a look of horrified amazement. Repeatedly Major Sullivan glanced at him and always found him gazing at the lady with the same terrified look. The Major at length whispered to him not to stare so at Mrs. —; that every one at the table was noticing it. Then the youth for a moment withdrew his eyes, but the instant after they were again riveted on the Colonel's lady.

"When the gentlemen were left alone, Major Sullivan proposed to the Lieutenant that they should join the ladies. The

latter assented, and followed the other mechanically as though in a waking dream. Once in the hall, and alone, the Major said in stern tones,—‘You are not to enter the drawing-room; you must come home with me. Your conduct has been most disgraceful! I insist upon it, that to-morrow, when in your sober senses, you write a note of apology to Colonel ——, for the more than rude manner in which you stared at Mrs. ——, all throughout dinner. He noticed it, I can tell you, and so did the servants. I was perfectly ashamed of the way in which you behaved—what was the meaning of it?’

“The Lieutenant made answer,—‘I assure you, Major, that I could not help it. As I live, I saw the Evil One bending over Mrs. ——’s chair and whispering in her left ear.’

“As they were walking slowly back to their quarters in earnest conversation—Lieutenant Montague persisting in the truth of his statement—a horse’s hoofs were heard galloping furiously behind them. They looked round, and saw one of Colonel’s ——’s men on horseback, spurring the poor creature, and shouting out—‘A doctor! a doctor!’ ‘What in Heaven’s name is the matter?’ cried the Major. ‘Mrs. —— has killed herself!’ It was too true. The unfortunate lady, on leaving the dinner-table, had gone to her own room and committed suicide.”

“And could no reason be given for this terrible act?” said Danecourt.

“Well, yes; but the scandal, whatever it was, was hushed up.”

“A horrible story,” said Weston.

“The reverse of pleasant truly,” said Darrell, and he puffed away vigorously at the cigar which he had just lighted.

“Will any one be kind enough to favour us with another, and so divert our thoughts from this most uncomfortable tale,” entreated Walford.

“I will,” said Winstanley, of Merton.

Meanwhile Guy had his glass in his eye, and was busy inspecting all the left ears in the room.

“What are you at?” said Gerrard, angrily; his own appendages in that way not being of the handsomest.

“Don’t be foolish,” said Weston; though he laughed, as did we all, at Gerrard’s evident confusion.

Guy smiled, and dropped his glass, as Winstanley began his narration, after warning us of its extremely personal character.

(To be Continued).

WILLIAM HOWITT AND HIS SPIRITUALISM.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES BY HIS DAUGHTER, A. M. H. W.

PART I.—HIS CHILDHOOD.

"My father's memory has become very holy to me; not sorrowful, but great and instructive. I could repeat, with softly resolved heart, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they do rest from their labours, and their works follow them;' no grain of truth that was in them but belongs to eternity and cannot die."—*Thomas Carlyle*.

WILLIAM HOWITT was born at Heanor, in Derbyshire, December 18th, 1792. Both on the paternal and maternal side, his ancestors had resided in that locality for generations. His father, Thomas Howitt, was the first of his family who joined the Society of Friends. This event was brought about through the marriage of the said Thomas Howitt with Phoebe Tantum, whose family had been Quakers since the time of George Fox. The Tantums, farming their own land, had resided for many generations on the same spot, an ancient grange, called Heanor-Fall. The Howitts had belonged to the Church of England. Indeed, several rectors of that name lie interred in the chancel of the church at Eastwood, a village lying distant some two miles from Heanor, on the opposite side of the Erewash Valley, and, according to Rutter's "History of the Sufferings of the Society of Friends," one of these Howitts, rectors of Eastwood, was a sharp persecutor of the Friends in the time of Fox.

The Howitts, originally possessing a fair estate, and intermarrying with their wealthy neighbours, in the course of the last century, like many other families in the country, leading a reckless, "jolly life of hunting, shooting, coursing, dining with one another, and indulging in excess, both of eating and drinking, for which country squires in the last century were notorious," had gradually squandered their land, their money, and their health, until their worldly fortunes had suffered an all but total eclipse.

With Thomas Howitt and his marriage with Phoebe Tantum of the Fall commenced a new day. "She was the last of her family who remained in the Society of Friends," writes her son, William Howitt. "My father was," he adds, "the first of his family who entered it. No doubt it was a good thing for him, as it confirmed those habits of sobriety and accumulation which he had commenced after so long a career of jollity and of spending by his own line."

It is not easy for us to realise the condition of England in such remote districts ninety years ago, either mentally or phy-

sically. The subtle influences—vivifying for the future, yet thoroughly destructive as regards the past—of the Great French Revolution, already in the rise of its terror when William Howitt was born, had not yet penetrated, except in vague and faint echoes, to these rural solitudes. There the slumber of generations of the old-world-past still brooded over both nature and humanity. Such spots still retained much of the rude comfort, and the not ungraceful simplicity of manner of life, mingled with poetry of many an antique observance, which, together with the surrounding luxuriance of the free, unkempt nature of woods, heaths, and meadows, bore within them the spirit of England in the days of the Tudors and Stuarts, rather than of the England, as we picture it, of the Georges. Ancient types of human character, full of violent passions and eccentric humours, linger long in such hidden spots; strongly marked are the tragic and comic incidents in the life-drama of such neighbourhoods. For tragic interest, witness, indeed, the wild and well-known history of the Byron and Chaworth families, connected with this very locality, Newstead and Annesley lying within a comparatively short distance of this edge of Derbyshire, though themselves situated in Nottinghamshire.

Cradled in a nook of this old England, environed by its sylvan and pastoral scenes, backed by the range of the beautiful hill-country of the Peak—on another side the district of Sherwood Forest, stretching away into romantic solitudes of primeval woodland and heathery wilderness—with places of historic note scattered here and there, Codnor and Bolsover Castles, Hardwick and Haddon Halls, Wingfield Manor, and Dethic—the romantic memories and traditions of these and many another stately or antique spot—lingering in the memory of the people, and feeding the ever active popular imagination: born of a mother keenly alive to every influence of her romantic native locality, and attached with a passionate love to life in the country, and to all rural things,—what marvel that the little William should have come into the world dowered with the heart and eye of a poet; or that in due course he should have “lived and moved and had his being” in literature, through his vivid delineation of the loveliness of English scenery—should have revelled in gathering up ancient, historical, and traditionary memories, and the quaint, racy, or sternly tragic features of a rural world already fading away for ever.

Jean Paul, in his autobiography, has said in his humorous way, “Let not a poet suffer himself to be born or educated in a metropolis, but, if possible, in a hamlet, or at highest in a

village. The excesses and fascinations of a great city are to the excitable, weak soul of a child, like supping at a midnight-table a draught of burnt waters, or bathing in fiery wine."

Little William had, it would seem, "*let himself be born*" in full accord with the philosophic recipe here laid down by the wise German philosopher. It gave a vigour to the physical frame, an elasticity to the mental being, a certain joyous hopefulness of heart, and an indwelling spirit of faith in the abiding beneficence of God, which never deserted him throughout his long and varied career. His was an instance of the truth enunciated by Wordsworth, that "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." Those who best knew him under the varied circumstances of life, can the best testify to the peculiar spirit of healthful hope in the beneficence of God, which wrapt him round, as with a spiritual garment, diffusing wheresoever he went, a light and warmth, and subtle invigoration. It was this "inner kernel of sweet joy" of heart—the mental health and *wholeness* (which in one sense truly is *holiness*)—this enthusiasm for all beautiful and pure and poetical things, which were for him essentially symbolised in the externals of natural scenery, that gave a perennial verdure to his writings, and that indescribable charm to his "Book of the Seasons," "Boys' Country Book," "Rural Life of England," "Visits to Remarkable Places," "Homes and Haunts of the British Poets," "Madam Dorrington of the Dene," and other writings especially devoted to the description or contemplation of the spirit of rural nature and life, which took so strong a hold on the affections and memories of his readers,* and which, in fact, were pure emanations from his indwelling spirit.

In his "Boys' Country-Book," he gives a graphic description of this period of his life—to him so fascinating, and which was as the acorn to the oak-tree of his life, containing quick within it, the very essence of all that had to follow.

He was the third of a group of six brothers—thus was in

* That I may not be accused of exaggeration in thus speaking of the spirit of my father's writing upon rural subjects, I would refer my readers to an almost exhaustive review of this class of the works by William Howitt, which appeared shortly after his decease, in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1879, under the head of "Rural England." The article is written, *con amore*, with a warmth of enthusiasm for the country, and with a glow of admiration of the works under review, showing how magnetically the spirit of the writing of William Howitt can work upon a congenial heart and mind. In the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1881, the same works are noticed in a similar spirit, showing that, in the course of forty years, their freshness and graphic truth had not vanished, having within them, indeed, the perennial brightness of Nature herself.

no lack of boyish companionship in his rambles and adventures; though mostly, it would appear, that it was with a troop of the lads of the village, who followed him—his trusty and faithful followers, willing to dare any enterprise under so dauntless a leader—that his most hairbreadth escapades took place, such as when he climbed to the topmost bough of some lofty old elm in search of a magpie's nest, or was held by his village comrades by the heels over a yawning mouth of an old coal-pit, in order that he might reach down into a concealed blackbird's nest. No wonder that his mother endured agonies of fear for the safety of her "little Billy," or that he returned home occasionally in so ragged a condition from encounters with "brush and brier," as to be threatened, henceforth and for ever, to wear a penitential garment of leather! Seeing, however, that George Fox himself, the apostle of "the Friends," is recorded to have gone about in the early days of his mission precisely so attired, this threat may have failed to terrify little William, who throughout life gloried to walk in the footsteps of Fox. Certain it is that the bird-nesting passion continued, a characteristic of William Howitt throughout life; not, however, that in his maturer years he rifled the lovely and fairy-like nests for their eggs, but was wont always to tell boys who accompanied him, "only to look at the eggs, and admire their exceeding beauty—beauty as of the rarest gems, formed by the Creative Spirit—or at most, *only to take one egg* as a specimen, and leave the rest for the old mother-bird."

This bird-nesting in all manner of places; bathing, swimming, fishing, cowslip-gathering in spring, and nutting in autumn; sliding and skating in winter, and the glory of the deep snows, made his childish days one long delightful holiday; riding on his pony "Peter Scroggins" far and wide—on Peter Scroggins he rode all through the Peak and into Yorkshire when he was taken to the great Yorkshire school—riding also when at home, all by himself, to his great delight, on this pony, to the Peak, sent by his father to pay the miners on his lead-mines, the money concealed about him in a bag, it being thought that no thieves could suspect so little a man of carrying so big a bag of treasure. Thus riding past solitary old halls, past great waters, and amongst the bleak, silent hills, what inward joy was his! His young heart absorbed the silent glory all around, to give it back again in his writings with added brightness. Rambling about with his uncle at the Fall when he went out shooting and coursing—for, Quaker though he was, this last remaining Tantum, like his ancestors, was as keen a sportsman as any to be found all the country round. Learning

thus everywhere knowledge of rural people, rural sports, and rural labour, working as a holiday joy with his father's men on the farm, learning to plough, to mow, to make hay and to stack it, to reap corn and to bind it up with the reapers—to say nothing of the amusement of gleaning with the gleaners and bestowing his gleanings upon the weakest, youngest, or oldest gleaner in the field—the boy soon understood all the labours of a farm. I well recall during a summer sojourn in Gloucestershire in his late life, his astonishing a reaper by taking up his sickle, as if for examination, and then reaping away with a wonderful zest and enjoyment at the peasant's blank amaze. Also, in still later years in Tyrol, to the equal surprise of a group of country folk, his mowing vigorously amongst them with one of their curiously long-handled scythes.

Then, too, there was the race of colliers, with their black faces, black clothes, black coal-pits, life of darkness and danger underground, jolly life above on the pit's mouth with their droll stories and yet droller nicknames; scattered about in the village the far less robust stocking-weavers, or "stockingers," as they are familiarly called, hanging over their ceaselessly noisy looms, in their close low rooms—all fed the strong, eager-hearted boy's awakening imagination—all called forth his pity and sympathy with the weary, monotonous life of toilers for their daily pittance of bread. "We delighted," he says, "to watch the progress of all handicrafts in the place; there was not a trade in the village (from the miller to the blacksmith, carpenter included) but furnished us with many an hour's observation, and with a great deal of useful knowledge thus casually picked up." At home, in the bowery old garden, there was the ceaseless joy of gardening; in the out buildings of the farm there was the keeping of all manner of domestic animals and birds, the boys' own special property. By the fire-side, with delighted faces bent over the volumes of *Natural History* of Thomas Bewick,* studying their inimitable head and tail-pieces, each containing a history of rural life—without doors, amidst the woods and fields and brook sides, in spots of true Bewickean picturesqueness—were the young brothers imbuing their souls with an enthusiastic love of natural history. Woods

* "History of British Birds." The figures engraved on wood by T. Bewick, 3 vols. Newcastle, 1797. Those head and tail-pieces in the *Natural Histories*, true gems of art, were the picture-gallery of my father's childhood. In later life he was one of the first writers who drew the popular attention to their exceeding truthfulness to Nature, and to the inventive genius which they display. The recent Exhibition in Bond Street of the collected works of Thomas Bewick will be fresh in the memory of our readers.

and fields were their museums of living specimens, and their halls of study. Not a bird's note, not a bird's nest, no haunt of creature in air, land, or water but became familiar to them. To Godfrey, the youngest, no habitat of rare plant, no habitat of grub, fly or beetle, for miles round, remained unknown. Every aspect of the seasons, every changing aspect of the heavens, by day or night, every atmospheric change as it affected the myriad tiny dwellers in the foliage and flowers, in the earth or sky of the landscape around was noted by the brothers—nothing fell unheeded out of their memories, and in due course was given forth again by William and his younger brother Richard to the world in poetry and poetic prose; by Godfrey, the youngest, in his labours as a Botanist and Entomologist, not unknown to his generation of "collectors;"—labours which added a lustre of scientific grace to his memory, still green in Melbourne, Australia, as one of the most benevolent of physicians.

In a faded drab-cover, the pages grown yellow, and the ink faded into a pallid brown, there exists a little manuscript written by my father in these early days—a plaintive phantom from a vanished world! Its author must have been aged eight or ten years. It is the first outcome of his enthusiasm for natural history; "the child being father of the man," it is an embryo of the later "Book of the Season," a book in its day very popular, and running through I know not how many editions, one of his most successful books, but now out of print. His first essay in verse, inscribed to his mother, is still extant in manuscript equally yellow and faded. It is an "Address to Spring," evidently formed on the model of Thomson's "Seasons." Some "admiring friend," unknown to the young bard and his family, sent it to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, where it had the honour to be printed. The number which contains these simple verses, "written by William Howitt, aged thirteen," contains a review of the first volume published by Lord Byron, "Hours of Idleness."

AT THE FRIENDS' PUBLIC SCHOOL AT ACKWORTH.

According to the published List of Ackworth scholars, William Howitt entered this school in the year 1806. It must have been shortly after writing the "Address to Spring," lovingly inscribed to his mother, possibly in the grief of his impending separation of three years—for once at that school in the old days no hope of "going home for the holidays." If the parents yearned to see their children, to their children they must travel, and see them at the great annual gathering of the Religious Society in that far-off Yorkshire locality.

A chronicle of these school-days with incidents of school-life amongst a set of quaint, old world people, in a somewhat primitive scholastic establishment, will be found in "The Boys' Country Book," where it forms not the least original portion of this picturesque chapter of his life.

Later on he was at school at Tamworth, placed with a young, active-minded master of decidedly a scientific turn of mind, not to say eccentric, and who, to the infinite delight of the youths, some of them scarcely younger than their master, employed them as assistants in his experiments in Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, etc., for lectures which he was wont to deliver in the town, and also in the development of his various mechanical inventions.

Thus, it must be confessed, in no very systematic manner did my father's early education progress. His *real* education came later through his innate love of books and of literature, which had from his earliest years made him an omnivorous reader. This was an appetite which ceased only with life. He was blessed in the possession of a retentive memory, which held fast once and for all whatsoever interested his mind, whether it were what he read, heard, or observed.

From youth upwards he possessed a power and a delight in acquiring foreign languages. Every now and again throughout life, even into old age, he would be drawn into the study of some fresh language, with every fresh language opening out for himself a new and endless world of enjoyment in its stores of literature and the thoughts peculiar to its people. His love of study was his real education, his truest instructor. This inborn nature of the student balanced the equally inborn desire for and love of change of scene, of movements and of activity in the free air and sunshine — this counter-balancing of tendencies brought about a harmonious union of mental with physical health.

To return to his mother, from whom we have seen that he inherited his strong attachment to rural-life. Equally from her did he receive his reverend admiration of the grand old poetry of the Holy Scriptures; equally his love of English poetry and of all poets. She had fed her children, from the cradle upwards, upon the sweet honey-comb of poesy, not alone from the poetry of the Psalms, and the divinely beautiful parables of our Lord, but also in the form of verses from her trinity of secular poets—Milton, Thomson, Cowper.*

* It carries the imagination curiously into the past, to recollect that, in those early infant days, William Cowper was the *modern poet*—an innovation in the poetical realm. He was still living amongst men, though rapidly fading from earth, wrapt in the deep clouds of dejection. Neither had Burns yet passed away.

Equally from his mother did he receive his baptism in the clear waters of the "Free Spirit"—which made him a liberal for life, both in religion and politics; this, through his mother's devotion, to the spiritual Christianity of her ancestors as set forth in the writings of the Early Friends, and in the records of their lives of patient suffering, obedient to the influence and monition of the Holy Spirit. The innermost doctrine of the Friends is the "cultus" of the Holy Ghost—"the Leader unto all Truth—the Comforter."

All these good and perfect gifts had he received through the being and influence of his mother—and yet one thing more—his susceptibility to the influence of the Invisible, his faith in the over-shadowing of the Supernatural.

His mother was a seeress, endowed with glimpses into the world of spirit, and the spiritual *aura* around her, and her memory, was potent in the future life of her son, in no small degree.

Also the house in which he was brought up from infancy was said to be—*haunted!*

In 1840, in the "Rural Life in England," vol. i. p. 211, writing about the "Terrors of a solitary Farm-house," William Howitt thus refers to the

HAUNTED HOUSE AT HEANOR.

"I myself have seen such sights and heard such sounds as would puzzle Dr. Brewster himself, with all his natural magic, to account for. In an old house in which my father lived when I was a boy, we had such a capering of the chairs, or what seemed such, in the rooms over our heads; such aerial music in a certain chimney corner, as if Puck himself were playing on the bag-pipes; such running of black cats up the bed-curtains and down again and disappearing no one knew how; and such a variety of similar supernatural exhibitions, as was truly amusing . . . After all, I know not whether the world of sprites and hobgoblins may not assume a greater latitude of action and revelation in their out-of-the-world places than in populous ones; whether the Lars and Lemures, the Fairies, Robin-good-fellows, Hobthrushes and Bargests may not linger about the regions where there is a certain quietness, a simplicity of heart and faith, and ample old rooms, attics, galleries and grim halls to range over, seeing that they hate cities, and knowledge that attends upon them."

It is to the same early home—the house is still standing and in possession of a member of the family*—that he refers in

* By a singular coincidence, in the old family-house at Heanor, the youngest of the six brothers—Francis Tantum Howitt, departed this life at the self-same hour and day, at the self-same moment it is believed—that his brother William Howitt died at Rome. They were the last of their generation. This singular circumstance of the two brothers so widely separated, passing away at the self-same time was referred to in the local newspapers and called forth, I have understood, several poetical effusions.

"The Boys' Country Book," and which was the scene of so many childish adventures recorded in that pleasant chronicle of his early years. He thus describes the house in its original state when in his infancy it was purchased by his father with land attached:—

"My father's house was a large old-fashioned place, with long dark passages, wide halls, half-a-dozen staircases, with closets and hiding-holes under them that were awful to my young imagination, with a step up, or a step down to every room in the house. The chambers hung with paper of a large pattern—scriptural scenes, and pastoral scenes, flocks of sheep and shepherds and shepherdesses, and haymakers with rakes and forks almost as long as real ones; and dressing-rooms with paper all covered with birds of paradise—such creatures as were never seen in paradise or out of it, with tails that were curiously linked to the heads of their neighbours, sitting on fanciful pedestals, with scroll-like feet running here and there, till the whole pattern was an inextricable entanglement. One side of the house was all glazed, having at some remote time evidently formed a conservatory; and there might be seen a large old-fashioned wilderness of a garden, bounded by a dark orchard and pond. The house had besides the reputation of being haunted."

In my father's autobiography written for his children—and still in MS.—he again refers to these hauntings of the old house.

"I saw and heard there," he says, "sights and sounds of various kinds during the winter evenings—saw movement of furniture without visible causes. I have seen chairs lift up their feet against the wall, and so remain, every one in the room observing the fact. At times we would have all the furniture in a chamber overhead in riotous commotion, as if some one were throwing it about, but on rushing up to the room with a light, we found all still and in order. At other times music of a plaintive and peculiar character would sound in a corner of the kitchen on one side of the great open fireplace. My mother also repeatedly said that she saw things pass athwart the house; at one time a greyhound going out through the glass of the window without breaking it, at another, the figure of some strange person. On my father pulling down the very old half of the house, with its strange passages and glass wall, there was found, under the floor of one room, a great quantity of old boards and other timber from the church, pieces of carved seats, etc., put there to prevent the running about of rats. The repairs of the chancel of the church was an obligation of the estate which my father had bought, and probably this wood had been put under the floor on the occasion of such repairs. It was immediately thought that the discovery of church-timber explained the cause of the hauntings, and, singularly enough, no such anomalous noises or appearances ever afterwards recurred. Sceptics would say, 'Yes,

this idea of the cause and its removal removed the real origin of the supposed hauntings,' but the sceptic will please to remember that, whilst the hauntings really went on, not a soul in the place had the least knowledge of the church-wood lying under the floor. It had been put there long before that generation existed, and there was no tradition of any such fact. Possibly my mother's mediumistic powers had more to do with the phenomena than the church-timber; but the fact remains that, with the removal of that strange old part of the house, the anomalous events ceased forever." *

In this old house, in William Howitt's very early days, occurred several events, which, from their supernatural character, left an indelible impression of blended mystery and reality upon the child's memory, and, doubtless, tended in no small degree, many years later, to open his mind to the reception of the phenomena of modern "Spiritual Manifestations."

Phœbe Howitt was, as we have already seen, a seeress into the invisible world, it was thus that she beheld

THE GHOST OF HER MURDERED BROTHER.

An account of this singular circumstance was given in "The Footfalls" of Mr. Robert Dale Owen, by William Howitt. He thus elsewhere writes of the event—

† "My mother had two brothers, Francis and Richard. The younger, Richard, I knew well, for he lived to an old age. The elder, Francis, was, at the time of the occurrence which I am about to report, a gay young man about twenty, unmarried; handsome, frank, affectionate, and extremely beloved by all classes throughout that part of the country. He is described in that age of powder and pigtails, as wearing his auburn hair flowing in ringlets on his shoulders, like another Absalom, and was much admired, as well for his personal grace as for the life and gaiety of his manners. One fine, calm afternoon, my mother, shortly after a confinement, but perfectly convalescent, was lying in bed, enjoying, from her window, the sense of summer beauty and repose; a bright sky above, and the quiet village before her. In this state she was gladdened by hearing footsteps which she took to be those of her brother Frank, as he was familiarly called, approaching the chamber door. The visitor knocked and entered. The foot of the bed was towards the door, and the curtains at the foot, notwithstanding the season, were drawn to prevent any draught. Her brother parted them, and looked in upon her. His gaze was earnest and destitute of its usual cheerful-

* It is in accord with accounts of other haunted-houses, that the hauntings cease with the destruction of the old-places—or haunted portions of them.

† *Vide* also—"Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," with narrative illustrations, by Robert Dale Owen. Philadelphia: Lippencott & Co., 1860. P. 378.

ness, and he spoke not a word. 'My dear Frank,' said my mother, 'how glad I am to see you! Come round to the bedside: I wish to have some talk with you!' He closed the curtains as complying; but, instead of doing so, my mother, to her astonishment, heard him leave the room, close the door behind him, and begin to descend the stairs. Greatly amazed, she hastily rang, and when her maid appeared, she bade her call her brother back. The girl replied that she had not seen him enter the house. But my mother insisted, saying, 'He was here but this instant. Run! quick! Call him—haste! I must see him!' The girl hurried away, but, after a time, returned, saying that she could learn nothing of him anywhere; nor had any one in or about the house seen him either enter or depart.

"Now my father's home stood at the bottom of the village, and close to the high road, which was quite straight; so that anyone passing along it must have been seen for a much longer period than had elapsed. The girl said she had looked up and down the road, then searched the garden—a large old-fashioned one, with shady walks. But neither in the garden nor on the road was he to be seen. She had enquired at the nearest cottages in the village, but no one had noticed him pass. Whilst my mother lay pondering upon this circumstance, there was heard a sudden running about, and excited talking in the village street. My mother listened: it increased, though up to that time the village had been profoundly still; and she became convinced that something very unusual had occurred. Finally my mother's alarm and earnest entreaties drew from her family the terrible truth that her brother had just been stabbed at the top of the village, and killed on the spot.

"The melancholy event had thus occurred. My uncle, Francis Tantum, had been dining at Shipley Hall with Mr. Edward Miller Mundy, Member of Parliament for the county. Shipley Hall lay off to the left of the village as you look up the main street from my father's, and about a mile distant from it; while Heanor Fall, my uncle's residence, was situated to the right; the road from the one country-house to the other, crossing nearly at right angles the upper portion of the village street, at a point where stood one of the two village inns, the Admiral Rodney, respectably kept by the Widow H—ks. I remember her well—a tall, fine-looking woman, who must have been handsome in her youth. She had one only child—a son—then scarcely twenty. He was a good-looking, brisk young fellow, and bore a very fair character. He must, however, as the event showed, have been of a very hasty temper.

"Francis Tantum, riding home from Shipley Hall after the early country dinner of that day, somewhat elated it may be with wine, stopped at the Widow's inn, and bade the son bring him a glass of ale. As the latter turned to obey, my uncle, giving the youth a smart switch across the back with his riding-whip, cried out in his lively, joking way—'Now be quick, Dick; be quick!'

"The young man, instead of receiving the playful stroke as a jest, took it as an insult. He rushed into the house, snatched up a

carving-knife, and darting back into the street, stabbed my uncle to the heart, as he sat on his horse, so that he fell dead on the instant, in the road.

"The sensation throughout the quiet village may be imagined. The inhabitants, who idolised the murdered man, were prevented from taking summary vengeance on the homicide, only by the constables carrying him off to the office of the nearest magistrate. Young H——ks was tried at the next Derby Assizes (but justly, no doubt, taking into view the sudden irritation caused by the blow), he was convicted of manslaughter only, and after a few months' imprisonment, returned to the village, where, notwithstanding the strong popular feeling against him, he continued to keep the inn. He is still present to my recollection, a quiet, retiring man—never guilty of any other irregularity of conduct, and seemingly bearing about with him a silent blight upon his life. So long as that generation lived, the church-bells of the village were regularly tolled on the anniversary of his death.

"On comparing the circumstances and the exact time at which each occurred, the fact was substantiated, that the apparition presented itself to my mother almost instantly after her brother had received the fatal stroke."*

There belongs to this morning-twilight period of little William's existence, an incident of a touching and spiritualistic nature, which often recounted by his mother, made an impression scarcely less profound upon his childish memory than the above ghost-story. It relates to the death of his maternal grandfather, Francis Tantum—the father of the young man whose tragic end has been just recorded. In it he beheld another instance—

HOW MUCH STRONGER IS LOVE THAN DEATH.

"My grandfather," writes William Howitt, "was a man of a mild and poetic temperament, extremely attached to a country life, and

* To her grandchildren (myself amongst them) Phoebe Howitt in her advanced age more than once related this ghostly experience. On one occasion, in an impressive manner she bestowed on me an old-fashioned oval brooch worn by her luckless brother when stabbed. On the gold mounting of its back and edge, it bore the indelible stain of his blood; on the front was seen a small figure of Justice, with bandaged eyes, in one hand holding a drawn sword, in the other the typical pair of scales. Some detail of the ghost-story I noted in a book of childish "*Memorabilia*." This little MS. turned up the other day; looking it over, I found one detail which had escaped my father's memory and my own. She referred to having on an occasion previous to the murder of her brother beheld him also in vision during his life-time, and when he was, as to the body, many miles separated from her. Like other seers, she was therefore accustomed to behold the spirits of the living as well as those of the so-called dead. A strong magnetic link of affection united the brother and sister.

of all the beauties of nature. He had often said, that if he might choose his death, it should be to pass away quietly on some vernal bank on some fine moonlight night. He had a friend, Jonathan Dunn, living in the village of Loscoe, about a mile from his house. For many years he and his friend had scarcely passed a day on which they had not paid a visit to each other. The way between their two homes lay through a deep winding lane, or along a picturesque valley, upon the bank of a wandering brook amidst woodlands, and by a large water. The two friends, now grown old, traversed these familiar scenes with unabated attachment to their beauties. One night, after Jonathan Dunn had been in bed some time, his wife awoke him, saying that his friend Tantum was knocking at the door. The old gentleman listened, and said sure enough it was Tantum's knock. He arose, opened the window, but saw no one at the door, though it was a night, bright with moonlight. He called out 'Frank!' My grandfather's name was also Francis. But no answer was returned. He put on some of his clothes, went to the door, and looked up the street and down the street, but no one was to be seen. He returned to his chamber, saying that it was very strange—certainly it was his friend's knock—yet where had he vanished to? Whilst speaking, the knock, loud and distinct, was repeated. 'That is Frank, and no mistake!' he exclaimed again, and went to the window, but could see no one: called, but obtained no answer. Upon this, being greatly disturbed, and saying that he was sure something had happened to his friend, he completed his dressing, and declared that he would go to the Fall to enquire. His wife earnestly endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. He set out, and had advanced half-way, when he saw his friend seated on a bank, and gazing fixedly at the moon. Approaching, he asked what had brought him out at that hour of the night? There was no answer, and his friend, appearing to gaze with a glaring eye at the moon, he touched him in alarm on the shoulder, when he rolled quietly over on one side on the bank. He was dead, and appeared to have been so, some time. He had died exactly as he had always wished to die; on the way to his friend's house also, and though unable to reach it in the body, it was clear that he had not taken his final departure without calling to give him a token of his remembrance. These facts are as well-known to my family as anything that ever occurred; they are such as have taken place too frequently in all ages and in all nations, and in numbers of families in the country to admit, of any more doubt than that the sun rises and sets, and that the seasons pursue their accustomed courses."

LITTLE WILLIAM IS HIMSELF SPIRIT-GUIDED.

"My paternal grandfather" (continues William Howitt in his autobiography,) "died on the 6th of November, 1799, when I must have been about seven years of age." I remember my father coming home much distressed. He had just witnessed his father's decease. He sat down on announcing this event to my mother, and gave way

to a paroxysm of tears. I was greatly affected by the scene, and certainly moved by some inward influence beyond my own childish mind. I went quietly away into a distant room, got a chair and reached up to a book-case containing a large family Bible, which I took down and carried, a considerable load for me, into the room where my father was sitting sunk in his grief. The book seemed to open almost of itself, and I began to read the first thing that I cast my eyes upon. It proved to be the 14th chapter of the gospel of St. John. I read 'Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.' I shut the book and was carrying it away when my father stopped me, took the book, opened it and read the words in evident astonishment, and then said, 'I have never been impressed before by these remarkable words.' He dried up his tears and seemed wonderfully comforted. I remember the whole transaction as though it were but of yesterday. From what I know, now, I see that it was an act of spirit-influence. It was always remembered in the family with a feeling of wonder, approaching to awe."

LITTLE WILLIAM BECOMES A SLEEP-WALKER.

"About the age of ten years I was," continues my father, "for a considerable time a sleep-walker. I well remember the circumstances. Soon after falling into slumber, I used to get up, being still profoundly asleep, but with my eyes open, and conscious of all about me. In this state I would go down stairs, making a moaning noise, as if in anxious quest of something. I remember, through the staircase window, seeing the lights from a shop of stocking weavers, in a cottage, on the opposite side of the road; hearing the sound of their frames, as they were called, their *looms*, and often of their singing. I used to enter the room where my parents were sitting, sometimes at supper; and once I remember my father put a roasted potato into my hand, of which I took no notice. They were accustomed to awaken me by a shake, and then, after a stare of astonishment, I was wont to decamp up stairs again as fast as I could. At length one night my father took his riding-whip and awoke me by a sharp cut with it. The shock which I received from this seemed to break the habit, for I recollect no further occurrence of the kind. Some people might suppose that I was shamming on these occasions, but my sleep-walking was real enough; though I had a consciousness of the things and persons about me, I was as under a spell, and could not avoid the ghostly walking, nor was I able to recover my waking-condition by any effort of my own. Besides this somnambulism, of which phenomenon, at that time, I had never read anything, in common with all the household, I saw and heard strange things."

The somnambulant condition developing in youth is a not infrequent sign of the possession of the faculty of introvision, of clairvoyance, and clairaudience for the things and sounds

of the so-called invisible world, which for want of more exact nomenclature, we Spiritualists of late years, have termed "Mediumship."

With this somnambulant state frequently commences clairvoyant dreaming. This dreaming of clear-seeing dreams, and also of singular dreams of a highly poetical, symbolic, and even prophetic character, accompanied my father throughout life. To several of these in due course I shall have to recur.

I would embody the spirit of William Howitt's early years, by giving, in his own words, praise to the earthly guardian-angel of his youth, and

PRAISE TO ALL GOOD MOTHERS.

"And what scene, except the brightest of the eternal Heaven itself, can ever cast into comparative dimness the paradise of a boyhood in the country, under the pure and angelic guardianship of a mother. In my own heart, such a time shines on through all the gladness or the sorrows of life, as a holy and beautiful existence, belonging rather to a prior world than to this. God in his goodness has built me a house, and peopled it with hearts that make existence to me precious and beautiful; but even with the fairest hour of that domestic peace and affection, which no thankfulness can repay to the Divine Giver, still gleams the serenest and most joyful sunshine of those days, when around the native home lay greenest fields, golden with flowers, murmuring with bees, musical with birds, and in some odorous part of the old garden, or under some orchard tree, I sat and listened to that voice, and gazed on that beloved face, which made the charm of the young world to me. There were walls of crystalline peace, hedges of rosy and innocent joy hemming in and guarding that true Eden of human life from all jeopardy and frostiness; wings of angels hovered around in the sunshine, and wafted airs of delicious soothing on the nightly bed. There is not a bird that sings—there is not a flower that blows in garden or in field—there is not a creature that belongs to the rural home, or enlivens the country by its presence or its voice that does not call up that day of paradisaical felicity, and the one ever loving, ever gentle, ever benignant being that made that felicity perfect. He that has been blessed with a worthy mother can never disbelieve in the being of a God, or the futurity of virtue. The peace and the glory of Heaven have received him into this world; the hand of angels has sown his early way with flowers of beauty from the sanctuary of God, fair beyond all mortal creation; the wisdom and purity of the Divine Nature has been shed for him on the maternal heart in measureless affluence; the glorious hopes of immortality have been made actualities on her tongue; the triumphs and rewards of goodness have arisen before him in the very tones of her voice as she sang to him the songs that stirred her own soul, like glowing faces and forms of seraphs, whose nature and mission he could not then comprehend, but saw and felt that they were beautiful. Yes, when a true mother walks amongst her young chil-

dren, there walks as actual a spirit of Divine love and loveliness as ever trod the pavement of Eternity itself."* ("Visit to the Home of Thomas Bewick," "Visits to Remarkable Places"—2nd series, 1841.)

KRISHNA AND CHRIST.†

BY ARTHUR LILLIE.

PART. I.

A CONTROVERSY crops up from time to time in which two sets of disputants each laboriously build up the same premises. The subject is the legend of the Indian Krishna. Between this and the life of Christ are points of resemblance far too close, it is urged on both sides, and far too numerous to be the result of mere chance. But when these facts are conceded, there is a wide divergence of inference from the facts. Dr. Lorinser, and Professors Weber and Wilson, stoutly maintain that East has copied from West, and that the Indian epic, the *Mâhabhârata*, or at least the *Vaishnava* portions of it, belong to a post-Christian date. On the other hand, certain equally zealous writers—Mr. C. J. Stone, of the High Courts, Bombay, and Mr. Strange of the Indian Civil Service—are confident that our gospel narratives are largely indebted to the Krishna legend. Sir W. Jones was also of opinion that this legend was several centuries earlier than Christianity; and that some of the Apocryphal Gospel legends were due to it. Briefly, that legend is this: Vishnu, who, in the *Vaishnava* portions of the great epic, figures as God Almighty, determines to become incarnate on earth to oppose the power of Kansa, who is the great genius of evil. He plucks two hairs, and places them in the bodies of two women, Devakî and Rohinî. The former, by and by, gives birth to Vishnu as Krishna, and the latter gives birth to Balarâma, a second incarnation of the god. A parallel is sought to be established between the Virgin Mary and Devakî at this point, for it is announced in the Vishnu Purâna that, from the moment Vishnu was in her womb, the *devas* sang songs of joy and triumph. Krishna, it is announced, was the eighth son of Devakî, but this, I am quite certain, only means was the eighth *avatâra* of Vishnu; for Devakî, literally "The

* In the character of Madam Dorrington of the Dene, in the novel of that name (Colburn, 1851), he has sought to paint a delicate and almost "Pre-Raphaelite" portrait of the mother and her surroundings. Her devotion to the sick and the suffering, in mind and body, amongst the poor of her neighbourhood, her passionate love of her children, her sympathy with the animal creation, her delight in the beauty of nature, and her spiritual piety, are all drawn from the life.

† The Cradle Land of Arts and Creeds. C. J. Stone. Sampson, Low & Co.

Divine," is plainly Virgo of the Zodiac, the Universal Mother, as a few verses of the hymn that the immortal spirits sang to her will show :—

"Thou art Matter, infinite and subtle, which formerly bore Brahma in its womb !

"Then was't thou the goddess of speech, the energy of the Creator of the Universe !

"As Aditi, thou are parent of the gods !

"Thou art light, whence day is begotten : thou art humility, the mother of true wisdom !

"Thou art the heavens, and thy children are the stars !

"Innumerable are the contents of thy womb, O mother of the universe.

"Thou art wisdom, ambition, light, and heaven.

"Thou hast descended upon earth for the preservation of the world !"

Kansa was the King of Mathurâ (the modern Muttra), and about this time a religious recluse, named Nârada, well versed in astrology, informed this monarch that the god Vishnu was about to be born in the womb of Devakî. The wicked king immediately gave orders that the infant should be seized and put to death. It happened that Nanda, a cowherd, was at this time journeying to pay taxes to Kansa, as Joseph to Herod. To save Krishna, a change of infants was effected, and the infant Krishna was transferred to the cowherd Nanda. When the emissaries of Kansa tried to seize the infant son of the latter a miracle took place : the menaced infant rose aloft into the skies, and his mother also quitted the earth. This episode suggests to the somewhat fanciful mind of Mr. Strange the woman clothed with the sun who brought forth the man-child, who both escaped into the heavens when the Great Dragon sought to devour them. Kansa, baffled in his attempt on the life of the infant Krishna, orders all male children to be put to death.

Krishna and Balarâma grow up amidst the cowherds, and sport and romp like ordinary cowboys. They play tricks upon cows and calves ; they pipe in the woods, and on one occasion the young Krishna tramples under foot a huge water-snake, the serpent Kâliya, the terror of the milkmaids, when they bathed in a certain tank. As Krishna eventually meets his death, by an arrow in the heel, the prophecy (Gen. iii. 15) has suggested another point of contact to those who trace resemblances between the lives of Krishna and Christ. When the former attains the age of puberty, he is adored by the young milkmaids, and on one occasion steals their clothes when they are bathing. Miss Gordon Cumming suggests that he did this to teach them a lesson of modesty, but I shall have to show

that the episode of the milkmaids is not so innocent as she supposes. At Muttra, to this day pilgrims arrive in crowds to hang little votive bits of rags on the fabulous tree whereon Krishna hung the garments of the Gopis.

Other points of similarity are adduced by Mr. Strange. Krishna forgives a female sinner, washes the feet of the Brahmins, cleanses lepers, and raises the dead. A female, crooked in person, accosts him, and he cures her and restores her figure. The son of Duhsala dies; Krishna lays hold of the dead man's hand, and says, "Arise!" He descends into hell, and restores the dead to life. Miss Gordon Cumming narrates that he stood "on a certain hill healing people who thronged around him, and made them whole, whether their disease was mental or bodily." "He once cursed a patch of ground, which is narrated to have remained barren to this day." With his touch he was able to dispel sin, says the Vishnu Purāṇa.* More than once he is transfigured before a favourite disciple, and his countenance emits a dazzling effulgence. In the end he dies from the wound of an arrow in the heel. According to Mr. Stone, his dead body is hung on a tree. I do not know in which Purāṇa Mr. Stone has found this fact. In Garrett's "Classical Dictionary of India," Jarā is said to have left the body rotting under a tree.† Details are added, which seem more in harmony with the Legend of Osiris than the Christian records. It is stated that some pious persons collected the bones of Krishna and placed them in a box. There they remained until King Indradyumna, a great ascetic, was directed in a vision to form an image of Jagannātha (vulg. Juggernaut), a name of Krishna. In its belly the bones of Krishna were placed, and the great architect of the heavens, Visva Karma himself, undertook to be the sculptor, on condition that he should be quite undisturbed until its completion. The impatient king, however, after fifteen days went to the spot, on which Visva Karma desisted from his work, and left the god without hands or feet. Brahma, however, in response to the prayers of Indradyumna, promised to make the idol famous in its mutilated condition, and, after a pompous ceremony, he gave eyes to the idol. This in India is considered equivalent to placing a soul in an image. A splendid temple, Jagannātha Kshetra, was erected near the town of Purī, in Orissa, the historical temple where so many thousands have been immolated before the celebrated car. Near this temple, in a tank, the bones and image of the god are supposed to be lying. The story of a dead sun-god, mutilated, shorn of his beneficent

* Wilson's translation, p. 542.

† Sub voce Jagannātha.

power and activity, and buried away in a box during the winter solstice, when the ancients believed the sun to be buried away in the bowels of the earth, is plainly due to the same chain of ideas which has given us the myths of Osiris, Atys, and Adonis with his pierced thigh. At the commencement of the summer solstice (our Easter), the dead sun-god rises again. This is the lesson conveyed by this story of Jagannâtha (the Lord of the World) and his image.

But it is upon the mystic teaching of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, and its alleged close resemblance to the teaching of the Fourth Gospel that a writer, Dr. Lorinser, most relies. "If we can find in it," he says, "passages, and these not single and obscure, but numerous and clear, which present a surprising similarity to passages in the New Testament, we shall be justified in concluding that these coincidences are no play of chance, but that taken altogether they afford conclusive proof that the composer was acquainted with the writings in the New Testament, used them as he thought fit, and has woven into his work numerous passages, if not word for word, yet preserving the meaning, and shaping it according to his Indian mode of thought—a fact which till now no one has noticed. To put this assertion beyond doubt, I shall place side by side the most important of these passages in the Bhagavad Gîtâ, and the corresponding texts of the New Testament." A selection of these passages, as given by Dr. Lorinser, is all that we have space for :—

"They who honour me are in me, and I in them."

"Dwelleth in me and I in him."—John vi. 56.

"None who honour me shall perish."

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 15.

"I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of beings."

"I am the first and the last."—Rev. i. 17.

"Among letters I am A."

"I am Alpha and Omega."—Rev. i. 8.

"From all sins will I free them. Be not sorrowful."

"Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."—Matt. ix. 2.

"I am the origin of all. From me everything proceeds."

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things."—Rom. xi. 36.

"As they turn to me so I honour them. Every day Partha men follow my steps."

"If any man serve me, let him follow me. . . . If any man serve me, him will my Father honour."—John xii. 26.

"No one knows me."

"No man hath seen God at any time."—John i. 18.

"Easy to understand, sweet to do."

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 30.

"I am the way, beginning and end."

"I am the way, the truth, and the life."—John xiv. 6.

"I am the first and the last."—Rev. i. 17.

"The most hidden knowledge will I teach them with understanding."

"Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God."—Luke viii. 10.

"Fools despise me in a human form."

"Took upon him the form of a servant."—Phil. ii. 7.

"The oppressed and they who hunger for knowledge, they who desire wealth, and the wise honour me."

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden."—Matt. xi. 28.

"The dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."—Matt. xi. 5.

"I know the beings who have passed, those who are and those who are to come."

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. iv. 13.

"Who seeking to be freed from old age and death have fled to me."

"If a man keep my saying he shall never see death."—John viii. 15.

"With heart and mind set upon me, thou wilt come to me no doubt."

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."—John vi. 37.

"In whom are all beings by whom this universe was spread out."

"For in him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts xvii. 28.

"Knowledge is enveloped in ignorance, therefore the creatures err."

"Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them."—Eph. iv. 18.

"Yet the knowledge of those in whose minds this ignorance has been destroyed by it illuminates like the sun the highest."

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 Peter i. 19.

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

"Let the Yogî exercise himself in secret."

"Pray to thy Father which is in secret."—Matt. vi. 6.

"Besides thee there is no one that can resolve this doubt."

"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."—John vi. 68.

"If a very wicked man honours me, and me only, he is to be thought good."

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Matt. ix. 13.

"He who knows me without birth or beginning, the great soul of the world, is free from all sin."

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3.

"Give thine heart to me; fix thy mind on me; so shalt thou dwell with me on high."

"Dwelling in the heart of every man."

"Only they who in faith follow my doctrine and blaspheme not will be delivered."

"They who eat the nectar of the leavings of this sacrifice pass into the eternal Brahma."

"They who honour me go to me."

"Dead in me."

"To be free from inclination, and from love for children, wife, and house, this is called knowledge."

"Thy birth is later, that of Vivasat was earlier. How am I to understand that thou did'st declare it in the beginning?"

"For the establishing of righteousness am I born from time to time."

"The ignorant, the faithless; he of a doubting mind is lost."

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."—Col. iii. 1, 2.

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."—1 Peter iii. 15.

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."—Rom. iii. 28.

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever."—John vi. 51.

"Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me."—John vi. 45.

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. iii. 2.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 26.

"Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"—John viii. 57.

"The lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Rev. xiii. 8.

"I am of thy brethren the prophets. . . . I am Alpha and Omega."—Rev. xxii. 9, 13.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark xvi. 16.

I must mention that on two occasions, not finding any appropriate text at the passage, I had (perhaps erroneously) written down in my notes when reading Dr. Lorinser's essay. I have substituted other texts of my own selection.

At this point the difficulties of the Krishna question really begin. In point of fact there are three Krishnas—

1. The Krishna of the Bhagavad Gîtâ.
2. The Krishna of the other portions of the Mahâbhârata.
3. The Krishna of the Purânas.

This raises a number of complicated questions. What is the date of the Mahâbhârata? If the original poem has been tampered with, what is the date of the Krishna interpolations? What is the date of the Purânas? If the Purânas are very

modern, may they not still enshrine a very ancient legend in modern guise?

Let us first see what the best Sanscrit authorities have to tell us about the Mahâbhârata and the teachings of Krishna.

Dr. Lorinser considers the Krishna portions to be direct plagiarisms from the Christian Scriptures. Professor Weber and Professor Wilson give a modified support to this theory. Professor Lassen combats this theory, and is of opinion that the incarnations of Vishnu existed three centuries before the Christian era.

Professor Bhândârkar, in a paper entitled "Allusions to Krishna in Patanjali's Mahâbhâshya," which appeared in the *Indian Antiquary* for January, 1879, writes thus: "I have thus brought together seven passages from a work written in the middle of the second century before Christ, which show that the stories of Krishna and his worship as a God are not so recent as European scholars would make them. And to these I ask the attention of those who find in Christ a prototype of Krishna, and in the Bible the origin of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, and who believe our Purânic literature to be merely a later growth."

Another Indian writer, Kâshinâth Trimbak Telang, combats the idea held by most Indian scholars, that the Bhagavad Gîtâ is subsequent to Buddha. He denies the sufficiency of the evidence that Christian communities existed in India before the third century, A.D., and holds that the divine character ascribed to Krishna is as old as the Mahâbhâshya of Patanjali.*

Regarding the Mahâbhârata itself, which is virtually a library of legends, Professor Goldstücker was of opinion that these were the production of many ages. Lassen holds that the ancient story was at any rate pre-Buddhistic. Professor Max Müller opines that 350 B.C. is the latest date that can be given to it, because the name Bharata is mentioned in the Sûtras of Asvâlayana.†

As so little that is definite can be gleaned from the authoritative utterances of our Sanscrit scholars, perhaps it will be better to turn to the literature itself. I will first of all give an analysis of the story of Krishna as narrated in the Vishnu Purâna, which is pronounced to be comparatively modern. This seems beginning at the wrong end of the question, but it was the process that made matters clear to me.

Considerable discussion has taken place during this century on the connection between the old religions and astronomy.

* "Bhagavad Gîtâ" (translation). Bombay.

† "Hist. Ancient Sanscrit Literature." P. 36.

The French writers, Dupuis and Volney, led the way in the discussion, and they settled that all the events and characters of the old sacred books had never any existence except in the stars, and the fables of the priests. France, when Dupuis wrote, was a Republic, fighting its memorable fight against the "ten allied kings" of French poetry, and as her priests at the time were vigorously helping the enemy, charges of imposture, cheating, etc., were vigorously aimed against the old priesthoods that they might hit priesthoods nearer home. On the other side the question was discussed in much the same dogmatic spirit. It has been revived recently from a new point of view, that of Mysticism. The Christos, the Osiris, the Bacchus, etc., represent, it is urged, not real men but an ideal *stute* that every man can reach, partly now, partly hereafter. The passage of the Sun through the Zodiac is the key of all these ancient sacred histories. No such person as Christ or Buddha ever lived, and the ancient priesthoods, far from being dishonest, never intended to use them and their histories except as symbols for the benefit of minds that could not take the higher initiations. There is a Law of Concordances as recorded by Swedenborg. This law was fully known to the ancient priesthoods. By this law every phenomenon of the seen world has its counterpart in the unseen. The Sun is the Saviour of the world from famine and death. The Sun gives light to the world. But the Sun itself is only a symbol of a light too dazzling for mortal eyes, the great Spiritual Sun hymned in the Indian mystic *Gâyatri*. And it is asserted now by mystics such as Mr. H. Melville and Mr. Oxley that all lives of sacred persons, in all the old sacred books are only allegories shadowing forth this mystic spiritual sun. An American writer, Mr. H. J. Briggs, has replied vigorously on the opposite side. In his "Mytho-Zodiac Theory of Religion" he holds, with Letronne and the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that the Zodiac was an invention of the Greeks, not begun till B.C. 500, nor finished till some centuries later. Hence it is not old enough by thousands of years to be the origin of those religious systems that have been ascribed to it. The motto of one side is all stars and no men. The motto of the other is all men and no stars. May not a mean be struck between the disputants? The life of a real prophet or hero can be described with the imagery of the Zodiac as well as a sham one. In fact, by the very Law of Concordances, is it not necessary that the angel, the ideal man of the sky, should have his suggestion, his picture, from time to time here on earth?

Thus, I feel myself bound to maintain, that the Krishna story is plainly a zodiacal myth. I do not mean by this that

nobody like Krishna ever existed. I only mean that the machinery of the Zodiac has been plainly used in the narrative.

In the *Rig Veda* there were seven Adityas. An Aditya is one born of Aditi, the Universal Mother. He is a Son of Earth, and also a Son of God. The number seven was selected owing to the prominence attributed by the ancients to the constellation they named The Chariot. In the *Purāṇas* there are twelve Adityas, the machinery having been transformed to the Solar Zodiac.

Vishnu, the Solar Godman, comes to earth as the Makara or Leviathan, the boar, the tortoise, the elephant (Buddha), the horse (Aries), the lion, and so on through the zodiacal mansions. For the Krishna legend, his mansion was plainly Gemini. Hence the clumsy introduction of Balarāma, the second incarnation, into the story.

The story opens with Vishnu in the sky, debating how the earth can be freed from Kansa. As God was imagined as a Brahmin in the Indian religion, here we have the Brahmin with the pot of holy water, the Indian Aquarius. His incarnation is effected by means of two hairs. Pisces, in the early Indian zodiac, was the cross called the Swastica. This at once explains an otherwise puzzling piece of symbolism. One hair is white, the other is black; white and black symbolising the dualism that was always more or less prominent with the Aryas. The cross fish of Pisces were in reality the Father and Mother of the Universe.

The next mansion is Aries, and at the date of Christ and Buddha, and plainly also of Krishna, this mansion was of great importance, for the sun passed the equinox at this period under Aries. This is the meaning I feel certain of the astrologer persuading the wicked king that his power is threatened by the young sun-god. The incident is common to the lives of Buddha, Christ, and Krishna. Just rising above the horizon at midnight, as the sun passes from Pisces to Aries, is the constellation Sagittarius, in India the Arrow of Death. Hence the attempt of Kansa; but the White Horse gallops away from his pursuers, and escapes to Taurus. Here we have the abundant imagery of milk-maids, cow-herds, cows and calves, all through the young sun-god's stay in this mansion, and also for part of his stay in the next, for the word used for Gemini in India is a very downright one, and implies that the young son-god fulfilled the duty, considered so important by the Aryas when the human race was sparse, of adding to the population of the universe. And now comes an incident which is common to the lives of all the Indian sun-gods, and plainly shows the zodiacal nature of the story. A court festival

always takes place, and a competition of strength, at which the young hero eclipses his adversaries by bending a mighty bow. With Buddha and Râma, and with Arjuna in the Mahâbhârata, the prize is a beautiful damsel, as the Aryas adopted the fashionable modern principle of promoting the survival of the fittest in their institution the Swayamvara, or Marriage by Athletic Competition. The explanation is easy—when the sun is in Gemini (imaged in India by a naked youth and damsel), at the pole of heaven at midnight is the Arrow (Sagittarius).

For this reason Râma, Buddha, and Kṛishṇa bend the bow that no one else can string. Another incident is significant. Kansa, at whose court the athletic competition takes place, treacherously attempts the life of Kṛishṇa by trying to have him trampled to death by the great elephant Kuvalayâpîdâ. Kansa is the sign Cancer, and when the sun is in this constellation at midnight, Capricornus (in India an elephant issuing from a Makara or Leviathan) dominates the sky. Kṛishṇa slaughters this elephant; and Buddha, prohibited from killing, hurls its dead body away. The white bellying cloud of the sky, according to Kuhe and Senart, first suggested the celestial elephant to the Indians. Certainly in the Vishṇu Purâṇa Kuvalayâpîdâ is said to be "vast as a cloud charged with rain." In the athletic competition Kansa is slain by Kṛishṇa, and he and his twin brother Balarâma are likened to two lions in the arena. Virgo is represented by the beautiful virgin Satyabhâmâ whom Kṛishṇa espouses. For her sake also he fetches from Paradise the famous Pârijâta tree, the Tree of Life. This tree is another emblem of the Mother of the Sky. Libra, as I suggest in my work, Buddha and Early Buddhism, was the tridentine design which the Buddhists call the Gem (Maṇi). The Vishṇu Purâṇa fully confirms this notion. At the moment that Libra is rising above the horizon there are prominent allusions to the Syamantaka Gem which is entrusted to Akṛûra, as Kṛishṇa is not yet pure enough to possess it. Later on, when the sun-god actually enters the sign of Libra, he obtains and restores to their owner the earrings of Aditi, the Universal Mother. This is another name for the Gem.

One general purpose seems to run through the Brahmin sun-myths, however much their incidents may vary. The ideal Brahmin, whom each poet constructs, must first of all fulfil his duties to the community. He must be brave in war. He must beget a son; enormous prominence is given to this in the epics. And when old age draws on he must abandon the lower for the higher life, and practise Yoga in a forest. This brings us to the mansion of Scorpio, imaged as a terrible

character named Bâna, with a thousand arms, and also by an impersonation of Fever with three heads and three arms. Kṛishṇa practises Yoga (magical and spiritual training) in the mystical swastica attitude, "resting a foot on one knee." At this turn a hunter, Jarâ (whose name signifies literally "old age" and "decay," another symbol of Scorpio), mistakes the foot of the god for a deer, and wounds him with the arrow of Death, Sagittarius. With a sceptic like Mr. Briggs, I might show that a second Zodiacal cycle is in the legend, and that it is feigned after each Zodiacal constellation has sunk under the horizon that Kṛishṇa kills it. Thus he slaughters the Demon Arishta in the form of a bull, Keśin in the form of a horse, the marine demon Panchajana (Capricorn) and so on.

This indisputable Zodiacal attribute is, I think, important. It shows that the author of the life of Kṛishṇa, when at a loss for an incident, derived it not from the Gospel according to St. John or the Gospel according to St. Matthew, but from the belt of constellations that at night time was patent to his eye. I shall resume this subject in another paper. When so many learned doctors differ it is hazardous to pronounce a dogmatic judgment. My impression is that there was no plagiarism on either side. Meanwhile I can recommend my readers who want further information, to refer to the work, "The Cradle Land of Arts and Creeds," by C. J. Stone. The author takes up the narrative of Kṛishṇa, and believes that the gospel narratives were largely indebted to it. But he writes in a sympathetic spirit; and this is by no means conspicuous with all who have treated the subject. Mr. Talboys Wheeler talks of the Kṛishṇa legend as a "travesty of Christianity." Why a travesty? The authors of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, whenever they wrote, were not carnival masqueraders, but earnest mystics and profound philosophers. Schlegel calls it "perhaps the only truly philosophical poem that the whole literature known to us has produced." *

Incidentally Mr. Stone's book gives graphic details of Vedic India, its monuments, creeds, cave temples, cities, manners, and customs.

One citation I must make. He shows that the Araṇi, or instrument of wood by which the sacred fire was obtained by friction, was of the form of the *Swastica* cross. From this wooden cross was born Agni, to which Agnus Dei has, he thinks, a verbal likeness. "The father of Holy Fire was Twashtri, the divine carpenter, and the mother, the divine Mâyâ. In the Rîg Veda are hymns in praise of the new-born creature, the little child laid upon straw," etc.†

* Hist. Ind., p. 470. † P. 182.

THE GREAT KINGSBURY PUZZLE.

CHAPTER V.

"And by decision more embroils the fray."

A WEEK after this I received an unexpected visitor.

"Il Capitano Barone Kingsbury," said Beppo, my old servant, suddenly throwing open the door of my little sitting-room. The rank of baron had been suddenly conferred, because the captain came in a splendid curricule.

Now I must say that this visit took me thoroughly by surprise. I cannot say that Captain Kingsbury had ever been positively rude to me; nor can I say that he had ever been positively civil. Is it not the sublime Lord Chesterfield who lays it down that the secret of the fine gentleman's trade consists in the nice adjusting of cringe and flout in the presence of the proud and the humble. But any slights that Captain Kingsbury may have shown me must have escaped his memory, for he walked into my room with his usual calmness.

"Doctor, that Artus boy is in another scrape," he began, taking the chair that I offered to him.

"What! Fever?" I said, alarmed.

"No—that is, not your kind of fever. '*Brayin*' fever, as an officer of my old regiment used to call it."

"You mean, I suppose, that he wants to do something imprudent," I answered, not liking the tone of his remark.

"Imprudent, if you like the word. He persists in fancying that it was Prince Presto that stuck him, and I don't say that he isn't right; and now he wants to call out the Prince."

"I don't see how this falls within the province of a medical man, Captain Kingsbury," I said, with some dignity. A doctor in his consulting-room is as supreme as a Pope in his Vatican.

"No, you can't do much; no more can I; but Miss Artus thinks we can——"

"Oh, Miss Artus wants me to try and bring Maximilian to reason!"

"Prince Presto is a cardsharp, as, I suppose, you know. It is utterly absurd to talk about a duel with such a man. An Englishman would be locked up in Bedlam for life if such a folly could be proved against him by his loving relations. Then these Italians are always in shooting galleries, firing at little plaster casts of Prince Bismarck, and poor old Napoleon III." This meant that Miss Artus, in calling in my aid, in concert with that of the captain, was only a shade more wise than her brother.

"But in what way can we influence him? How do matters stand?"

"I don't know that any mischief has actually been done as yet; but it is believed that the young fool has quite made up his mind to be shot or pinked. Some strong influences must be brought to bear. What, I know not, for these Americans don't care anything about the opinion of society."

"And then he is so fearless, so rash——"

"Jump up into my curricule, and we can see better what is to be done at the Palazzo Aldobrandini!"

"Thank you, I have a patient to visit—an urgent case; but I will follow you immediately."

What was the meaning of Miss Harry sending for me? Was it purely out of anxiety for her brother? I knew that she loved Max more than any one in the world. Was she a little sorry that I had broken away from her?

When I entered the Aldobrandini Palace, I found a stirring scene. Miss Harry was in tears; the Captain was flushed; Max was angry and defiant. Words had evidently passed between them.

"He'll kill you!" said poor Miss Harry, between her tears.

"Listen to your sister, and don't lose your life like an idiot!" said the Captain, gruffly.

"I beg to remark, Captain Kingsbury," said Max, with great anger, "that I am not an idiot, and that I don't allow people to call me one!"

"What, do you want to fight me too? All right; because then we should have a fair encounter. These men are used to stick people in the back, or to take advantage of their inexperience, and murder them with a small sword."

"Doctor, implore him not to be so wicked," said Miss Harry to me, "they are sure to kill him."

"It is not a question of my life, darling; I want to shoot a scoundrel, a cheat, a bravo!"

"Folly," said the Captain.

"In America, I should have shot a scoundrel like that without calling him out. The police in Europe are sadly in need of a supplementary official to keep perfect order—Judge Fiveshooter!"

"This is not America, my dear sir," I began; "in certain wild parts of the United States, Lynch-law may be necessary——"

"And they said, let us Lynch, and they *lunched*." Tomfoolery and tragedy often stalk on hand in hand.

"Tell me exactly what has occurred?" I said, for I saw that, under the present excitement, it was difficult for the voice of reason to make itself heard until calmness was restored.

"There is really no challenge as yet, and no real occasion for a duel," said Miss Harry.

"Prince Presto wanted Max to play cards with him once more," said Kingsbury, "and Max wrote that, after what had occurred, he refused to do so."

"Is that all you wrote?" I said to Max.

"Well, I don't know that I could write much more."

"If that is all you have written," I answered, "I really see no cause for any proceeding to extremes."

"Don't you see, Doctor, he must ask for an explanation, and it would be rather 'one horse' of me to draw back. At any rate, I won't."

"Allow me to observe, Max," I said, "that a cool head coming fresh to the discussion of a subject like this sees it often in a new light. A gentleman visits another, and finds himself stupified by drink, robbed, and then stabbed with a stiletto. These are ample reasons for him to decline paying a second visit to the same house. No explanations of any sort are called for, and if any one comes to exact them, he can be told that you have none to give. You are the aggrieved party, and explanations, if in any direction, should go to you."

"Yes, Max, that is common sense. Will you listen to it?" said the sister.

"And she said, wilt thou? and he *wilted*." The vein of buffoonery was strongly on him this morning.

"And I don't think the Prince really wants to see a very dirty transaction further advertised," I pursued. "It's his interest to let the thing drop. Suppose he fought with you and killed you; that would not mend matters. The *Bianchi* would insist on a public trial, and would do their best to ventilate the matter thoroughly. This would mean infamy and ruin, even if insufficient evidence allowed the Prince and his friends to escape."

"That's true! that's capital! Why didn't we think of all this before?" said Miss Harry.

"One thing strikes me as very important in all this——" began Captain Kingsbury.

"There, Harry, you see that even Kingsbury calls this rhodomontade 'all this,' and knows as well as I that it won't do."

"What I was going to observe when you interrupted me was, that if there is to be any affair, it is highly important to get them to give the challenge. You thus avoid rapiers. A pistol is often treacherous to the most skilled bravo."

Was this a judicious speech at the present moment?

"Answer me this, Kingsbury: don't you in your heart of hearts think that I am bound to fight him; and are you not convinced that it was Presto who struck me?"

"I certainly think that it probably was."

It is to be observed that the most important question of Max was left unanswered, and affairs which had begun to look hopeful fell once more into a dangerous groove. Are there not peacemakers in the under-world who, by their peacemaking, more embroil the fray? Miss Harry suddenly burst in upon us with a *coup d'éclat*.

"There it is," she said, crying piteously; "I never knew any one so unfortunate as I am; you all turn against me, and talk about these—horrid pistols—as if they were—toys. Max—knows quite well—that his honour in no way—requires it—and yet he plays—with death—like a great child—you are all very—wicked—for a sword—can kill—a sister—or a father—quite as easily as a—wicked—unfeeling—boy."

These words, sobbed out with strong emotion, caused Max to promise his sister that he would have nothing to do with the duel. How

was it that a tender girl was brought in to take a part in this grim scene! Men do not usually discuss plans of slaughter in the presence of their sisters. Miss Harry, however, was shrewd, courageous, self-contained. Had she somehow guessed what was upon her brother's mind? And was she an unexpected guest at the conference?

CHAPTER VI.

"Look on her face, and you'll forgive them all."

MISS HARRY, at the Aldobrandini Palace, had been too much occupied to think of anything except her brother's safety. Nevertheless, I observed that she received me with a very warm greeting. In her efforts to bring her brother to reason, had she not at her back a man of the world—a man of war? And yet she sent for me! Did this prove that she trusted me, and did not quite trust Captain Kingsbury? Also, might I not have misinterpreted her momentary anger on the day of the Polo, which might have been caused by some supposed neglect on my part of my charge, Max. Drowning love like drowning life clings to its straws. Odd that these dead dreams, dead caresses, dead injustices, dead endurances—traceable still in old journals—should suddenly become once more of vital importance in the affairs of a living world.

What a miserable dolt I had been to give up all my splendid opportunities of constantly seeing Henriette Artus. My lofty chivalry and trust had been vanquished by a paladin with a Polo stick! And my folly was not at an end. Not being able to see Miss Harry much now, I took a morbid delight in avoiding her altogether. When I was in the house, and Max was convalescent, he used to be taken out in a carriage, and the father, Artus, dreading his impetuosity, used always to implore me to accompany him, and take the fourth seat. Driving out in Rome means necessarily a visit to an aqueduct, an old Christian shrine, a crumbling temple. Upon my first arrival at Rome, I had taken a great dislike to sight-seeing, and had come to the conclusion that the enthusiasm for ruins, and the existence in the world of the mighty Mr. Cook, the excursionist-compeller, were two incompatible things. But these drives with Miss Harry had quite changed my views. And one of the paradoxes of my present mood prompted me of a night when my work was done to revisit the spots where I had once seen her stand. All this seems to have little connection with the *affaire Kingsbury*, but it led up to an event, as you shall shortly see, which may, perhaps, throw a glimmer of light from an unexpected corner.

Three weeks passed, and then Lady Dubnock caught the Roman fever. To my surprise she sent for me as her medical adviser. I found that the attack was a severe one. I prescribed certain remedies, and promised to call again in the evening. When I returned, I found Henriette Artus installed in the sick-room.

I knew that Lady Dubnock had been very friendly to this young lady, and that she was much attached to her; and, no doubt, Miss Harry found the counsels of the elder lady of great service, launched as she was in the world without a mother to guide her. Lady Dubnock had a wide experience of the world; and she was religious without the Pharisaisms of Lady Priory. There is a God for the lovers, says the proverb, in the same way that there is a God who takes care of the crazy footsteps of the drunkard. Here was I loving fondly, but determined to do nothing for myself; and now the fates had thrown pretty Miss Harry once more across my path, and I was to meet her constantly at Lady Dubnock's house. It is true we met only in the sick-room, and interchanged a greeting, a hand-shake, a commonplace word, but love's greatest happinesses are often in these simple things.

One day, having to write a prescription in the drawing-room, I entered the room suddenly, and there I found Henriette.

"Doctor, I am so sorry you got offended with me," she said, advancing resolutely towards me, but with a little blush on her countenance.

"I offended with you, Miss Artus——" I answered, clumsily, in stammering tones.

"That means that you are offended with me still—does it not? And very likely you are justly offended."

"Why should I be offended with you, Miss Artus?"

"Don't you remember your saying something about gallipots one day—something horribly, horribly rude—now don't interrupt me, for chattering is a lady's privilege. I daresay I said something to provoke it, something very worldly, very mercenary!"

"Don't talk like that, dear Miss Artus, I'm sure you can never be mercenary."

"Oh, yes I can though. All our sex can, and I speak only for them. For what purpose has our cunning adversary, the devil, designed delicious dresses of dove-coloured silk and tulle? Why has he planned palaces, jewels, lace? And, above all, why has he invented those diabolical distinctions of rank which your orators denounce, and we Americans idolise?"

"Oh, please don't talk so."

"Wiseacres say that he does not now exist, but we poor, weak women know better. When the retribution comes, the wrong-doing is made manifest." She said this in a very curious tone of voice.

"What do you mean?"

"Something painful, something very out of the way is preparing. Folks think that because plays and novels now-a-days tell us only of commonplace love-distresses of Mr. Humdrum and Miss Average, all real tragedy is banished from the world. Have you seen papalately?"

"No!"

"I wish you could look at him without alarming him; he is not well. It is all that odious Mr. Barringer——"

"Mr. Barringer!" It struck me that, selfishly engrossed with my own vain fancies, I had forgotten to make a single inquiry about this man as I had promised.

"Yes, or a scent, perhaps of coming evils. Besides, that silly business of Max is not at an end."

"Why, what has occurred?"

"I don't know. Everything is kept from me this time, but *something* is going on. It is all my fault; for if papa had not seen how fond I was of gewgaws formerly, he would not have toiled to be so rich, and Max would not have been so useless and idle. I have *seen* in a sort of dream Max standing with a pistol in his hand."

"My dear young lady," I said, taking her hand, "do you know that this constant watching by sick-beds is breeding sickly fancies."

"Don't believe it," she said, not attempting to withdraw her hand, "nothing is further from the truth."

"You do not know what we should lose—what I should run the risk of losing—if you didn't take proper care of yourself."

"Tut, tut!—I will live to plague you all for many a long day." She said this with pretty flippancy, and withdrew her hand from mine, but not abruptly.

"Dear child, I am serious. I have not known you long——"

"That's it," she answered, with an attempt at flippancy.

"But I now know that I have one duty, one mission in life, and that is to watch over you—how shall I say—as a father, a brother, a perambulating medical prescription?"

"As a very, very tiresome man," she said, roughly.

"Are you serious?" I said, abashed.

"Of course, I am serious; and, of course, you are very tiresome." This time there was a little twinkle in her eye.

"Excuse me, I did not mean to offend you."

"Oh, no; I am very ungrateful—indeed, if I had not driven you out of the house with that foolish speech, you might have kept Max out of mischief."

"Tut, child, if ever these clouds prove not fancies but truths—if our ranks in life should be unexpectedly levelled, and you should want a devoted friend, protector, husband——"

"No, no—it can't be—I thought you had quite understood all that." The answer was a long time coming. Why did I not take her into my arms at that moment? How different the lives of many people might have been at this moment! Inscrutable mystery of heaven, that the fates sometimes punish the puny cowardices and diffidences of strong love more cruelly than an assassination or a treason.

Upon leaving the house of Lady Dubnock (it was in the *Via Capo le Case*, half way up the hill) I repaired to the house of a Mr. Hoskins. This gentleman had crushed my enthusiasm for sight-seeing on my arrival in Rome. Everywhere—at the Forum, the Vatican, the Temple of Minerva at Albano, I found Hoskins with a drab umbrella, lined with green silk, and three daughters very much "tied

up." He was a stockjobber, or something of the sort, and I hurried off to him, to get him to tell me all that he knew about the Albert Co-operative Credit Company. His drab umbrella, lined with green silk, was in the hall at the time. How different did that article seem to me now. Hoskins knew nothing against Mr. Barrington, and he told me that the Albert Co-operative Credit Company enjoyed a high reputation in the city; but perhaps the firm was a little too enterprising. He saw no cause for alarm.

That night (not for the first time) I wandered round the Palazzo Aldobrandini, for I knew Miss Harry was going to sleep at home. It was an ancient pile, with massive stone balustrades to the windows, which had seen (so I pictured to myself) cavaliers serenading beauties, and masked figures, menacing and terrific, swaggering around them—seen flashing rapiers and spouting wounds. How I regretted the days of old romance.

Suddenly the sound of a footstep struck upon my ear. One side of the palace was bounded by a very narrow street, the Via del Greco. The moon, shaded until now by a dark cloud, suddenly sent forth a strong ray, which illumined the face of the stranger. It was Captain Kingsbury, who had just left the palace. We recognised each other at the same moment.

The human face as a mask is far superior to a surface of cardboard and black velvet; but even a human mask may be allowed accidentally to fall down. This is what occurred on the present occasion. The ray of moonlight revealed to me a very strange expression in the face of the captain. It was full of menace and hate. A moment afterwards the mask was replaced, the calm, passionless mask of a well-bred man.

"Hulloa, Doctor! I took you for an assassin, hey!" and he passed on muttering something that I did not hear.

The age of the old romance is dead, but bitter loves and cruel rivalries still exist; and masked figures swagger around them menacing and terrific. An intoxicating question surged suddenly up in my mind. Was this hate levelled against me, and, if so, why?

CHAPTER VII.

"And as I stood a crash of muttering thunder
Burst in far peals along the waveless deep."

THE next day I visited Mr. Artus, the father, and examined him as well as I could. The fears of Miss Harry seemed justified.

In London, I have amongst my patients a Mr. Billion. He is a successful speculator. He has a palace at Lancaster Gate, crowded with pictures, delf, tapestries. He has a large estate in Leicestershire, in which county he once swept a shop. He has a steam-yacht, a moor and salmon river in Scotland; and Cabinet Ministers are amongst his guests. With Mr. Billion as his text, a novelist might draw his cheap moral: Here is a man without brains, without soul, a man whom nature destined to sweep a shop, and whose destiny has

somehow been marred—an underbred clown that we are content to worship as one of our gods, because he has drawn a prize in the great city lottery. These and similar phrases a gifted novelist might fling after Mr. Billion, as he drives by in a fine fur coat, with a bunch of blooming footmen, behind his yellow chariot.

But a doctor deals with the body as well as the soul, and he follows Mr. Billion to his dressing-room, and probes beneath the coat of fur. Promptly he discovers that Mr. Billion's wealth was not handed over to him by an accident, but bought very dearly. By sleepless nights it was created—by sleepless nights it is retained. His palaces are mere counting-houses haunted by long lines of ghostly figures. His splendid banquets mean to him toast and water and Liebig's food. His pleasant pink and brown Argyllshire hills are peopled with the fears of huge money collapses. Mr. Billion, during the short time that I knew him, tripled his fortune, and then went out of his mind. He got to believe that he was a pauper, and his relations to humour him, used to give him sixpence a-day to sweep up a few leaves in his Leicester mansion.

From the case of Mr. Billion I judged the case of Mr. Artus. He had the same money anxiety and restlessness. With him also vast material luxury meant a property and not an enjoyment. But his fears were removed from the region of the sordid by his great love for his daughter, and his solicitude concerning her. There are tragedies where folks in Roman costume perish by the agency of material steel. There are tragedies in which the poignard is moral, but quite as fatal. A catastrophe was rapidly approaching, worked up to by more than one character of this little drama.

Miss Harry entered the room whilst I was examining her father. She had her bonnet on, and with her was an English gentleman that I had never seen before. She greeted me with some little constraint, almost coldness. The stranger was a man about forty, slightly built, and a little stooping in figure. He was dressed in a grey shooting jacket, and looked like a College don out for a holiday.

Soon Lady Sherwood and Lord Robin Hood were announced, and afterwards, a little to the surprise of everybody, Prince Presto. Lady Sherwood was moving heaven and earth to get Miss Harry for her son. She cringed, she coaxed, she schemed; and when Mr. Artus lost his money, she was the first to treat Miss Harry with ineffable insolence. I always felt abashed and annihilated in the presence of Lady Sherwood—a poor *pariah* in the presence of Brahmins of the Yellow Streak; and, on the present occasion, I sat in a corner silently digesting the unexpected unkindness of Henriette. Prince Presto was by Miss Harry at no great distance, and fragments of their conversation came to me from time to time.

"Ah, it is *horreur*," said the Prince, "an assassin. I, a nobleman of the holiest aristocracy, ranked with the *canaille* of the Piedmontese King!"

"You exaggerate matters, Prince," said Miss Harry, attempting to soothe him.

"One of my rank has his ancestors, his race, his *honneur*—he has the great sentiment, you understand."

"No, Prince, we have no ancestors, you know," said Miss Harry, a little hurriedly.

"Ah, you misapprehend, beautiful Miss," said the Prince, with Italian warmth, "the great sentiment, the great sympathy of the man and the woman is a mystery of the heavens—it is like a perfume of the church."

"We have no perfumes in our church, Prince. Canon Brocklebank says that they are wrong."

"Ah! do not mock that great sympathy. It is the note of the organ——"

"Darling girl, your dear papa says that we may take you to Lady Cumberland's kettledrum this afternoon. She wants so much to see you." This opportune interruption of Lady Sherwood relieved Miss Harry, if it allowed a certain air of mystery to remain upon the great sayings of Prince Presto.

By and bye, Miss Harry came suddenly to a seat close to mine.

"Doctor, you must really save Lady Dubnock for us, we have entrusted her to you."

"I was going to tell her the result of my visit to Mr. Hoskins, but she shirked the subject rather oddly."

"I feel certain," she said, rather hurriedly, "that the reason why Lady Dubnock is so much above all the trickeries and pettinesses of this world of vanity is, that she is deaf. When your hearing is acute and good, you must have what is mean and petty dinned into your ears every day, and this must have its effect at last upon the mind; but when people have to talk to a deaf person, they must weigh their words a little, and select ideas which they think likely to please. It is almost impossible to say a mean thing through a speaking-trumpet; It would sound so horrible before it was half out——"

"And yet Lady Dubnock is shrewd enough. She knows that life is not all rose-water." I had observed from the tone and manner of the young girl that she wanted to-day to talk upon subjects that were not too near home.

"She is very intelligent, and that is so nice. Her experience is the cream of other people's lives, drawn off through the tube of her speaking-trumpet. Saints with the world bricked off from them are mere *vegetables of excellence*—lilies that are white because they cannot grow blue."

The next afternoon, at half-past five o'clock, I had an engagement to meet Dr. Cotrone. Although my time was much occupied, I had determined to go to it. Dr. Cotrone had been very kind to me, and certain flattering opinions that he had uttered concerning my medical skill had got me many patients. He was an archæologist as well as a doctor, and the invitation was to watch some new excavations that were attracting interest.

When I arrived I found that, besides Dr. Cotrone and Count Forlimpopoli, who was conducting these excavations, the only other per-

son present was the English stranger, that I had met at the Palazzo Aldobrandino, the College don.

A very beautiful antique gem had just been exhumed. It was a gold ring, with a sardonyx bearing the *tetra grammaton*. The stranger pointed out the four holy letters, and told me that the Jews and Gnostics used such rings as amulets.

"Who is that?" I said to Dr. Cotrone, when the Englishman had gone off.

"What, do you not know him?" he said in Italian. "Ah, then, you are no archæologist?"

"No; I do not know him——"

"My friend, he is Sir Baronet Kingsbury!"

"Sir Rupert?"

"Yes, sir!" said the Italian, attempting English this time.

This fact struck me at once as remarkable. No doubt he was not as robust as his brother. One was an active sportsman, and the other was a scholar. But I certainly failed to detect any other symptoms of advanced consumption in him. How had such a report arisen, and who had spread it?

"And your ignorance is more remarkable, my friend, because he is the *brother*."

"Brother!"

"Ah, secrets—I forgot. The beautiful, most beautiful Henriette is a friend of yours."

"Henriette!—you speak in enigmas."

"Do you not know that *she* weds Captain Kingsbury, the brother of the baronet?"

BRIEF NOTICES.*

THE PERFECT WAY: OR, THE FINDING OF CHRIST. London: Field and Tuer; Hamilton, Adams, & Co., Paternoster Row.

This sumptuous volume consists of a series of "lectures delivered in London before a private audience in the months of May, June, and July, 1881." They deal with abstruse subjects, and they handle them mystically. The intuition, as the necessary complement of the intellect, is invoked to collect the scattered recollections of past existences, and to bring their experiences to bear. The author is a pronounced Re-incarnationist, and has more affinity with the continental school of Spiritists than with English Spiritualism. This, however, does not, by any means, detract from the interest of what is written in this volume respecting subjects on which the widest

* For the convenience of country readers and those who find a difficulty in procuring books through the usual channels, any work noticed in this magazine will be sent on receipt of published price and postage upon application to the business manager of the *Psychological Review*, 4 New Bridge Street, Ludgate Circus, E.C.

divergence of opinion, and the greatest latitude of speculation, may well be permitted. The sum of our knowledge is so small, that we are, none of us, in a position to throw the first stone at the most audacious hypothesis-monger.

The scope of the book may be gathered from a brief synopsis of its contents. The subjects dealt with are—

1. *The Soul: and the Substance of Existence.*

Really to know the essential self is to know God. Matter, a mode of presentation of spirit, is necessary to its manifestation: but to rise above matter into the domain of pure spirit is to reach the realm of true religion. From this standpoint the progress and development of individual souls is discussed, and their infinite variety in character and needs is pointed out. Then comes a disquisition on the nature of God, as Living Substance, one: as Life and Substance, twain.

2. *The various Orders of Spirits, and how to discern them.*

Herein is discussed the nature of astral spirits; of those magnetic spirits who control mediums—mere shades, “reflects rather than souls”; and of those celestial spirits who are the guardians of those who aspire to purity and perfection of life.

3. *The Atonement.*

This abstruse and much controverted doctrine, in its crude presentation and definition, is mystically expounded, with considerable power and much illustrative analogy.

4. *The Constitution of Existence.*

The doctrine of correspondence: the evolution and behaviour of the cell, as the germ of life: the relations of substance and form pave the way for the consideration of the doctrine of

5. *The Fall, and the Redemption of Man—*

which are treated in the same allegorical manner as other subjects have been. Lastly we have

6. *God as the Lord: or the Divine Image—*

a mystic disquisition on the nature of God and of Christ as the culmination of humanity and point of junction with Deity.

Various appendices illustrate points of difficulty, and introduce specimens of the teaching which has been given to the author. These writings are archaic in style, and mystic in tone.

It is impossible to give any complete idea of the book, but a sample may be taken to show the method of handling. The third lecture deals with the various orders of spirits, and how to discern them. It is laid down that the sphere into which we pass after leaving the material is the astral, a fourfold sphere or belt containing four orders of entities, the highest of which is Elementals; next, Souls; third, Shades; and last, Astral Spirits. These correspond to the four elements.

Every event has an astral counterpart, and these ghosts of events can be evoked or conjured up. These are astral phantoms, having no real being.

The next sphere contains the Shades, Lares, and Penates of the dead: some, mere spiritual corpses on their way to final extinction; some, Ghosts, representing only the earthly minds of the departed; some, Souls, who are in purgatory. Here also are the devils; some of great power and malice. They are in hell, and are not immortal. There is no arch-devil.

The next or second sphere contains purified souls who are at rest before re-incarnation. They have no power of communication with this earth.

The first or highest sphere contains the higher Elementals who pervade both the Macrocosmic planet, and the Microcosm man.

"Spirits of the dead," the author contends in common with the Theosophists, with whom, indeed, he has considerable affinity, is an incorrect expression: "There are only shades of the dead, and souls of the dead." The true ghost consists of the exterior and earthly portion of the soul, and remains in the astral sphere, capable of holding, through a sensitive, converse with the living. It is, however, but a cast-off vestment of the soul, and has in it no element of endurance.

Metempsychosis and Re-incarnation are taught as truths.

The spirits who control mediums are said to be Astrals; and a very gruesome picture is drawn of them and their evil devices. We have no space to go into the strange mixture of plausible speculation and probable fact that is mixed up throughout the book, and especially in this lecture.

It must suffice that we say that, putting aside certain doctrines which English Spiritualists do not accept, and certain others on which opinion is divided, the book contains much that is deserving of attention, though not of implicit acceptance and belief. As a thought-provoker it may do good: but there is an odd air of dogmatism, and a pervading "Thus saith the Lord," throughout its pages, which sometimes raises a smile, and not unfrequently a desire for discussion. We do not imagine that much good could come of any amount of discussion on such speculative subjects as are frequent in its pages: nor do we touch in any way the references to vivisection, and kindred subjects which bristle through the volume. It will be an object of curiosity to Spiritualists rather than an authoritative exposition of truth such as it professes to be.

TRANSCENDENTAL PHYSICS; an Account of Experimental Investigations. From the Scientific Treatises of Johann Carl Friedrich Zöllner. Translated from the German, with a Preface and Appendices, by Charles Carleton Massey, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-Law. Second Edition. London: W. H. Harrison, 33 Museum Street, W.C. 1882. Price 4s., post free.—(Received, but review is deferred till next month.)

MONTHLY SUMMARY
OF
CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL OPINION.

"LIGHT" (LONDON).

J. P. T.'s "Uncertainties of Spirit Identity" has caused a good deal of comment from various writers, and especially in *Notes by the Way*, where M.A. (Oxon.) treats the difficulty at length. His remarks on the conditions under which it is usual to sit in public circles, are quite in accord with the position taken up in the last number of the *Psychological Review*. "The time has surely really come when the dangers and difficulties of Spirit-communion should be acknowledged, and the conditions which are in any way adapted to fraud, or even to perplexity and incompleteness in observation, should be absolutely discountenanced. In the interests of truth and progress in knowledge, for the avoidance of error, for the protection of mediums exposed to a risk that we cannot gauge, *let darkness be done away with, and in our public circles 'let there be light.'*" If the leaders of the movement will take some such stand, and resolutely adhere to it, we shall soon find a change for the better.—Dr. Wyld again discourses on a favourite subject, "Theosophy, Christianity, and Buddhism." The Christianity of which he speaks is very different from the vulgar, coarse, and debased form which the Bombay Theosophists are acquainted with, "religion for women and not for men." This, says Dr. Wyld very aptly, "reveals the oriental mind, which, for thousands of years, has despised, enslaved, and degraded women." Moreover, it displays complete ignorance of what the writer is dealing with.—Mrs. Kingsford, M.D., prints a paper on "The Systematisation and application of Psychic Truth," in which she enforces her view, that Spiritualism forms an elevated platform from which to look at the various questions that perplex the public mind. She desires Spiritualists as Spiritualists to enlighten the world on all the "burning questions with which the lay and scientific worlds are now ablaze." It must be confessed that the attempts that have hitherto been made in this direction, have not been very harmonious, nor indeed very successful.—There are some further instalments of Spirit Teachings which contain much suggestive matter for reflection.—Mr. H. T. Humphrey's paper on *Spiritualism and Christianity*, read before the B.N.A.S., deals with a well-worn subject in a manner that avoids what may be objectionable to any person. The views held are so divergent, that this is in itself no small success. But beyond this there is not much light.—"Iota" writes well on the Spiritualism of our most spiritual poet, Tennyson.—Mrs. Penny throws some new light on the esoteric meaning of the doctrine of Vicarious Suffering.—The average of excellence is well maintained.

"THE MEDIUM" (LONDON).

"Marriage in Spirit Life" is a discourse by Mrs. Cora Richmond. Her guides believe that true marriage is perpetuated in the world of spirit. They are righteously severe on the various marriages of convenience that degrade the ideal on earth. There is plenty of room for denunciation there.—Mrs. Hardinge Britten, it is sad to read, is compelled by illness to discontinue her lectures till further notice. She has been doing valuable work in the North. It is to be hoped that she may soon regain perfect health.—"Charles Darwin, a Mind Study," deals phrenologically with a great man. Strength, power, endurance, are the great characteristics, backed by large veneration, and self-reliance. A shocking portrait seems to be intended to show the relation between the great naturalist and those poor relations with whom he connected mankind.—A. T. T. P. records a very striking control by Fredk. J. Wilmer, the young man who was murdered on the Thames Embankment one Sunday early in the present year: and another by the aunt of a girl who was that very day tried for robbery at the Surrey Sessions. These are in quite another direction from the usual Historical Controls, and by no means less instructive and interesting.—Garibaldi is treated in the same manner as Darwin, and a rather characteristic portrait of him is given. He is said to have been a "normal medium: one extremely sensitive to psychological impressions." Probably this was so. He was a man of impulse and enthusiasm, with great power of influencing his fellows.—Mr. J. C. Wright's discourses on Darwin and Garibaldi, are decidedly remarkable efforts from "a working mason." They are utterly beyond the ordinary intelligence of any such man: psychological curiosities in various ways.—So are Mr. M'Dowall's papers, one of which on Pressure and Perviousness is completed in one of this month's numbers.—So again are Mr. Thomas's disquisitions on the Geozonic Spheres—very remarkable productions.

"THE HERALD OF PROGRESS" (NEWCASTLE).

Mr. Jones aspires to make our contemporary the *War Cry* of Spiritualism. It is a curious matter for speculation that the Salvation Army should be able to spend thousands of pounds on the purchase of halls for their services, should circulate a journal by the quarter of a million every week, and should generate enthusiasm for ideas that certainly will not bear calm discussion, and are as inferior to the conception of Spiritualism as those of the fanatic always are to those of the enlightened thinker, and yet Spiritualists circulate the exposition of their belief and knowledge sparsely and with difficulty. Let any unprejudiced person only buy a *War Cry*—one of the 250,000—and read for himself the crude fanaticism that floods those whom Salvation Armies reach.—But we do not expect that our contemporary will occupy such a position in Spiritualism, though we do note with real pleasure an improvement in the matter it contains.

But is such a deliverance as this likely to impress the potential quarter of a million that are to be reached? What does it all mean?—"We have mingling with men in scientific circles, divisional know-nothings beyond the structure of the petal of a flower, or of a beetle, or other trumpery auxiliary in the army of animated forces; who strut and act big in the high-heeled boot of a fellowship. Such five-foot-one-inch giants tell us prophecy is a myth, only practised by almanac makers and their compeers, because to such anti-rationalists and oblivionists hereafter is a myth—the one is impossible, because the other is."

"THE BANNER OF LIGHT" (BOSTON, U.S.A.).

The celebrations of the thirty-fourth anniversary still continue to fill the pages of our contemporary. Mr. Emmette Coleman on "The Philosophy of Obsession" is very suggestive. This is his conclusion:—

"In my judgment all cases supposed to indicate the agency of evil spirits can be completely and rationally accounted for in the light of the foregoing principles. These four things cover, I think, the whole ground—

"1. Disordered mental action, independent of all spirit-influence.

"2. Disordered mental action in conjunction with a beneficent spirit-influence exerted for the restoration of mental equilibrium.

"3. Action of unwise, but well-disposed spirits in their experiments upon partially developed mediums.

"4. Psychological action of wise spirits for the thorough development of their mediums.

"I have never seen or heard of a case of obsession in ancient or modern times that was not completely covered by these principles."

—A clearly attested case of Spirit-Photography through the mediumship of Mrs. Carter is recorded from Kansas City, Mo. The evidence reads as though it conclusively established the fact.—Mr. Kiddle assails Mr. A. J. Davis in regard to his recent utterance against fraud. But surely Mr. Kiddle knows that fraud exists, and his energies might profitably be expended in denouncing it.—F. J. Briggs writes at much length on "The Maltreatment of Mediums for Materialisations." He maintains the possibility of fraudulent action on the part of the spirits. It is impossible to say that this may not be. But then, what sort of spirits are these who so cruelly betray their mediums, and how are we the better for their society?—"The American Spiritualist Alliance," formed for the purpose of promoting unity among Spiritualists of various types of opinion, is now conducting the Secular Press Bureau, formerly under the sole charge of S. B. Brittan. With him are now associated Messrs. Kiddle, H. J. Newton, E. R. Goodrich, and Judge Nelson Cross. It should do good work.—Allen Putnam supports the probability of fraud being on the side of the spirits. Very well! Prevent the spirits from practising fraud by using conditions that exclude it.—

Mr. Hazard on "Oriental Magic" is very amusing. A sample is worth quoting:—

"Multitudes of Europeans and not a few Americans, intelligent merchants and others, who have resided in India or China, or visited those countries, have seen the famous 'Basket Trick,' so-called. This performance is yet common in India, but has become rare in China. This class of juggler appears in a street with a wicker basket that is very similar to that in which Irish potatoes were imported into New York fifty years ago. It is cylindrical in form, and of capacity sufficient to admit and contain an ordinary-sized boy of eight or ten years.

"The performer, having selected a favourable location for accommodating a crowd, may be soon seen with keenly pointed rapier in hand in pursuit of a boy who flies and screams in apparent terror of his pursuer. Of course the boy is soon caught, and despite apparently desperate struggles thrust into the basket, and its relentless lid closed upon him. The narrow sword finds ready passage through the open wickerwork, and blood is flowing therefrom in all directions. The boy is dead, of course—but soon reappears in good order for another course of the same treatment. This little fellow may be—probably is—actuated by filial relations; *perhaps a son or grandson of the juggler, who having passed to spirit-life, beneficently reincarnates himself in a country where millions of poor people live on the verge of starvation!*"

— Messrs. A. E. Newton, Kiddle, Cross, Bacon, Densmore, Lyman, Babbitt, Wetherbee, Storer, Hatch and various others have put forward a counter-declaration to that signed by A. J. Davis and others. They deprecate rude and rough methods of treatment in dealing with the phenomena of Spiritualism. There we are with them. The medium need never be treated otherwise than with respect, except when the fault is his or her own. But fraud must be prevented.

"RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL" (CHICAGO, U.S.A.).

Mr. Kiddle opens the attack on A. J. Davis's manifesto, but his remarks deal rather with the accidents than with the essence of the subject. He is personal rather than conclusive.—Dr. Crowell prints a long and elaborate defence against some criticisms passed on his denunciations of fraud by the *Banner*, and a certain journal of extremely abusive proclivities, whose existence he might well have ignored. Dr. Crowell has a right to be heard. He is an old and experienced Spiritualist, with a clear head and unblemished character. He has made large sacrifices for the cause that he defends, and his views are those which are commending themselves to thinking men. Mr. Hazard and Mr. Kiddle are criticised with perfect politeness, but with much effect. "It will not do for Mr. Kiddle to declare that he is in favour of testing mediums while he strenuously opposes the employment of any tests excepting such as he may be pleased to prescribe." That is the point. Few tests are of any use in darkness, and in a room which

may have been prepared for fraud, and among confederates who can help it on.—It is sad to read that allegations, in favour of which much evidence is adduced, of fraud are made against Watkins, the Psychographic medium. The *Journal*, while considering them proven, thinks that he is “not a professional swindler. He does not premeditate fraud, neither does he resist the impulse to perpetrate it. He is a weak, good-natured, comparatively harmless creature. His moral faculties are defective, and his brain is not strong; his intemperate habits aggravate these weaknesses. He is wholly unfit to buffet the world as a public medium.” Is not this what might be written broadly of many public mediums who have been physically or morally deteriorated by promiscuous sittings? And is not these to a certain extent corroborative of the position taken up by some Spiritualists, that the cheating is not fairly chargeable on the medium as a responsible agent? There is no doubt that Watkins is a genuine medium.—The San Francisco Spiritualists, to the number of 82, including 35 mediums, come forward to endorse the attitude of the *Journal* in the denunciation and repression of fraud. This is as it should be. The *Journal's* zeal is undoubted; if it be also according to discretion it will do a much needed work.

“HARBINGER OF LIGHT” (MELBOURNE).

The most important part of the diversified contents of the *Harbinger* is again concerned with Mr. Spriggs' sêances. We extract from the account given two note-worthy facts—

“The earlier sittings of the month were marked by an occurrence as striking as any that have been recorded during the progress of these manifestations. This was the recognition, by five different sitters (including one of the visitors), simultaneously, and independently of each other, of a spirit-form (never before materialised in the experience of the circle), as being that of an old colonist and well-known energetic pioneer in the cause of Spiritualism, who passed over some five years ago. Amongst those who recognised this spirit-friend were his son, daughter, and nephew. He came on two occasions, and displayed considerable emotion at being able thus visibly to manifest his presence to his relatives and friends. On the second occasion he shook hands with Mr. Carson, who stood up for the purpose, and who consequently had a better view, not only of the full form, but also of the wrinkled features and thin beard. Through Peter, the same spirit-friend afterwards transmitted a few words, using the identical phrase which was specially characteristic of him to those who knew him in earth-life, and mentioning (correctly) the incident which led to his investigation of Spiritualism. He has since communicated in the usual way—by trance-mediumship—a longer message, in which he uses the same familiar expression, and refers to the same incident.”

The second narrative is as follows :—

"The other special feature of this evening was as follows: Geordie had been manifesting with great power and freedom, walking about the room, and showing the medium repeatedly. After a time he went behind the medium, and drew the curtains back until somewhat more than the lower half of the medium's form, including his hands, was plainly visible. He then so arranged the curtain that it remained stationary in this position, and advanced into the circle. Passing by the sitters, he proceeded to the door, which he opened and passed through into the front portion of the premises, as he has so frequently done before. This visit he repeated several times. On the first occasion he brought back with him two volumes from the book shelves, which were found to be, rather appropriately, 'Spiritualism as a New Basis of Belief.' On another occasion he brought back with him a die-stamp set in a heavy frame work, to reach which he must have traversed the entire length of the shop. He again went out, and returned bearing more books. He then showed a bunch of flowers to the sitters so that they might identify them again, and passed out of the circle-room bearing the flowers with him, leaving them, as was afterwards ascertained, at the extreme end of the counter. On his returning to the séance-room, it was suggested that he should take a pencil with him and write something. This Geordie accordingly did, and on his return proceeded to the desk and wrote a few words, stating where he had been writing, namely, on a contents-bill posted up against the glass door leading into the street. This was immediately verified. Mr. Terry proceeded outside, followed by Geordie—and found the name 'Geordie' written in bold characters on the spot indicated. The point, however, which our readers are requested to bear in mind is, that during all these visits of Geordie to the front portions of the premises, bringing back thence first one object and then another, the curtains remained disposed as above stated, drawn back and exposing the medium during the whole time to view. The distance between the chair occupied by the medium and the glass door on which the name was written has been measured, and the *shortest* distance between the two points that could have been traversed by Geordie is found to be 42 feet."

"THE THEOSOPHIST" (BOMBAY).

The May number of our contemporary is again concerned with Mr. Oxley's "Philosophy of Spirit," which book is reviewed at great length "from the esoteric and Brahmanical standpoint," by T. Subba Row, B.A. The notice is unfinished, though it extends to nine columns. It might easily be condensed into a quarter of the space it now fills. The writer thinks there are "real points of divergence between Spiritualism and Theosophy in their fundamental doctrines." A good deal of definition would be required before that could certainly be said.—*Light* is taken to task for declining to admit the Rev. Joseph Cook as a fair type of the Christians. In fact he is not, and his blatant self-assertive advertisement of his own opinions did

not merit notice. At the same time it must be admitted that he had a very bad time of it in India, and probably was glad enough to get out of the hornet's nest that he had slipped into.—“The Perfect Way” receives enthusiastic praise as being a spontaneous outburst of philosophy, “closely, in many of its most important essentials, resembling that of the Order [of Himalayan Brothers] whose existence they have inferred from their own discoveries.” It is “unfinished, unexact, and laden with error in details,” but the “very errors of such a book deserve more respect than the best elements of most metaphysical speculation. The chief errors, as viewed from the standpoint of *The Theosophist*, seem to be bound up with the sublimation and interpretation of Christianity, and of the spiritually complementary character of man and woman.—The Supplement gives some idea of the extent to which the Theosophical Society has spread throughout India. There seems to be an open rupture, however, between the Society and the man who figured as its chief light, “the revered and respected” Leader of the Arya Samaj, Pandit Dayanand Saraswati.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THOUGHT READING.

On the eve of going to press last month the *Nineteenth Century* for June reached me, containing the first report of the Thought-Reading Committee of the Society for Psychical Research. No time seems to have been lost in the new society vindicating its *raison d'être*, and if this is a sample of what may be expected, there will not be much occasion for adverse criticism. The report is signed by Professor Barrett, Edmund Gurney, and Frederic W. H. Myers, the former of whom, it will be remembered, contributed an article on the same subject to this *Review* in October last.

The present contribution is a valuable addition to the rather limited literature dealing with this phase of psychological research. The authors introduce the subject by directing attention to the difficulties which beset the enquirer, and point out that nothing could at first sight look less like a promising starting point for a new branch of scientific inquiry than the “willing game” of modern drawing-rooms, which is too well known to require description here. Professor Barrett and his coadjutors consider, however, that a *prima facie* case exists for attributing performances of this sort to an obscurer cause than mere muscular action, and that scattered instances, bearing out this view, will be encountered from time to time by those interested in the search.

In the course of their inquiry they found that, apart from the doubts incident to physical contact, many other sources of conscious or unconscious delusion remain to be guarded against. Indications may be given, not only by a preconcerted code, but by the most transitory

direction of the glance, or the slightest shade of facial expression. An equally obvious danger lies in low whispering, or even soundless movement of the lips; and the faintest accent of approval or disapproval in question, or comment, may give a hint as to whether the effort is tending in the right direction, and thus guide to the mark by successive approximations. Any exhibition of the kind before a promiscuous company is nearly sure to be vitiated by one or other of these sources of error. For instance, Mr. Bishop and Mr. Stewart Cumberland—whose results, though very uncertain, and apparently never obtained without contact, or proximity almost amounting to contact—still seem in some cases sufficiently unlike mere “muscle-reading” to warrant further inquiry—have obtained their reputation under precisely the conditions which they thought it essential to avoid.

It was no easy matter to obtain a suitable subject. By a fortunate accident, however, after long waiting, they heard of a family—the same as that referred to in Professor Barrett’s article in the *Psychological Review*—in which the attempt to obtain phenomena of the kind in question had been attended with singular success. A series of experiments were made, the character and the method of enquiry adopted being as follows:—“The enquiry took place partly in Mr. C—’s house, and partly in lodgings, or in a private room of a hotel, occupied by some of our number. Having selected at random one child, whom we desired to leave the room and wait at some distance, we would choose a card from a pack, or write on paper a number or a name which occurred to us at the moment. Generally, but not always, this was shown to the members of the family present in the room; but no one member was always present, and we were sometimes entirely alone. We then recalled the child, one of us always assuring himself that, when the door was suddenly opened she was at a considerable distance (in their own house at the further end of the passage), though this was usually a superfluity of caution, as our habit was to avoid all utterance of what was chosen. Before leaving the room the child had been informed of the general nature of the test we intended to select, as ‘this will be a card,’ or ‘this will be a name.’ On re-entering she stood—sometimes turned by us with her face to the wall, oftener with her eyes directed towards the ground, and usually close to us and remote from her family—for a period of silence varying from a few seconds to a minute, till she called out to us some number, card, or whatever it might be. If this was incorrect, we usually allowed a second trial, and occasionally a third. At short intervals another child was chosen or a different test applied. To give an example: the following results were obtained on the evening of April 12, in the presence of two of our number and the family. The first attempt of one of the children was to state (without searching) the hiding-place of some small object, the place having been chosen by ourselves, with the full range of the house, and then communicated to the other members of the family. This

was effected in one case only out of four. The next attempt was to give the name of some familiar object agreed on in the child's absence, as 'sponge,' 'pepper-castor,' etc. This was successful on a first trial in six cases out of fourteen. We then chose a card from a full pack in the child's absence, and called upon her to name it on her return. This was successful at once in six cases out of thirteen. We then tried holding small objects in the hand, as a 'latch-key,' a 'half-sovereign,' a 'green ball'—which were at once rightly named in five cases out of six. A harder trial was now introduced. The maid-servant having left the room, one of us wrote down the name 'Michael Davitt,' showed it round, and then put the paper in his pocket. The door was now opened and the girl recalled from the end of the passage. She stood close to the door amid absolute silence, and with her eyes on the ground—all of us meanwhile fixing our attention on the appointed name—and gave after a few seconds the name 'Michael,' and then almost immediately 'Davitt.' To avoid any association of ideas, we then chose imaginary names, made up by ourselves at the moment, as 'Samuel Morris,' 'John Thomas Parker,' 'Phoebe Wilson.' The names were given correctly *in toto* at the first trial in five cases out of ten. Three cases were complete failures, and in two the names given bore a strong resemblance to those selected by us, 'Jacob Williams' being given as Jacob Wild,' and 'Emily Walker' as 'Enry Walker.' It was now getting late, and both we and the younger children were very tired; and four concluding attempts to guess the name of a town in England were all failures, though one of us had previously obtained remarkable success with this very experiment."*

The general results are summarised in the following paragraph:—

"The outline of results during the present investigation, which extended over six days, stands as follows:—Altogether 382 trials were made. In the cases of letters of the alphabet, of cards, and of numbers of two figures, the chances against success on a first trial would naturally be 25 to 1, 51 to 1, and 89 to 1 respectively; in the case of surnames they would of course be indefinitely greater. Cards were far most frequently employed, and the odds in their case may be taken as a fair medium sample; according to which, out of the whole series of 382 trials, the average number of successes at the first attempt by an ordinary guesser would be $7\frac{1}{2}$. Of our trials, 127 were successes on the first attempt, 56 on the second, 19 on the third, making 202 in all. On most of the occasions of failure, 180 in number, second trials were made; but in some cases the guesser

* Less ordinary names than those above given were correctly guessed by the children on later occasions, as Isaac Harding, Esther Ogle, Arthur Higgins, Alfred Henderson. Names which begin with a vowel or H are preferable to those which begin with some pronounced consonant, as minimising the chance of suggestion by conscious or unconscious whispering, or movement of the lips. It is worth mentioning that experiments on naming towns, hiding-places, and objects held in the hand, as being less decisive, or at any rate less striking than the others, were almost entirely abandoned after this first evening.

professed inability, and declined to make more than one, and in others we allowed three; no trial beyond the third was ever allowed. During the last day or two of trial, after it had occurred to us to notice the point, we found that of the failures to guess a card at the first trial, those wrong both in suit and number were a small minority. Our most striking piece of success, when the thing selected was divulged to none of the family, was five cards running named correctly on a first trial; the odds against this happening once in our series were considerably over a million to 1. We had altogether a good many similar batches, the two longest runs being 8 consecutive successes, once with cards and once with names; where the adverse odds in the former case were over 142 millions to 1, and in the latter something incalculably greater. If we add to these results others obtained on previous visits, it seems not too much to say that the hypothesis of mere *coincidence* is practically excluded. But common sense demands that every mode of explanation known to us should be exhausted before the possibility of an unknown mode is considered; and we may now inquire whether any other recognised cause will sufficiently account for the results."

The general objection that a morbid state of mind, or craving for notoriety, might have furnished the children with exceptional powers of deluding Prof. Barrett and his friends is answered by the fact that, whatever the impulse to deceive, yet all recognised means of gratifying it were excluded where the investigators alone knew the things selected to be done, and therefore, the attribution of the power of doing them to the children's mental condition, would be rather a restatement than an explanation of the problem. Equally unsatisfactory is the indirect argument from vexatious runs of failure, or the hypothesis of exalted sensibility of the ordinary sensory organs, or the explanation which might be sought in conscious indication given by the sitters; while, as regards collusion on the part of the family, that seems completely guarded against by their exclusion either from the room or from participation in the requisite knowledge; and a group of results like that mentioned above, obtained under these conditions, and reaching or even exceeding the average success of the whole series, goes far to negative such an explanation.

The whole matter is summed up in the following manner. They say,—“The phenomena here described are so unlike any which have been brought within the sphere of recognised science, as to subject the mind to two opposite dangers. Wild hypotheses as to how they happen are confronted with equally wild assertions that they cannot happen at all. Of the two, the assumption of *à priori* impossibility is, perhaps, in the present state of our knowledge of Nature, the most to be deprecated; though it cannot be considered in any way surprising. We have referred to the legitimate grounds of suspicion, open to all who have only chanced to encounter the alleged phenomena in their vulgarest or most dubious aspects. Even apart from

this, it is inevitable that, as the area of the known increases by perpetual additions to its recognised departments and by perpetual multiplication of their connections, a disinclination should arise to break loose from association, and to admit a quite new department on its own independent evidence. And it cannot be denied that the department of research towards which the foregoing experiments form a slight contribution presents as little apparent connection with any ascertained facts of mental as of material science. Psychological treatises may be searched in vain for any account of transmission of mental images otherwise than by ordinary sensory channels. At the same time it may serve to disarm purely *à priori* criticism if we point out that the word 'thought-reading' is merely used as a popular and provisional description, and is in no way intended to exclude an explanation resting on a physical basis. It is quite open to surmise some sort of analogy to the familiar phenomena of the transmission and reception of vibratory energy. A swinging pendulum suspended from a solid support will throw into synchronous vibration another pendulum attached to the same support if the period of oscillation of the two be the same; the medium of transmission here being the solid material of the support. One tuning-fork or string in unison with another will communicate its impulses through the medium of the air. Glowing particles of a gas, acting through the medium of the luminiferous ether, can throw into sympathetic vibration cool molecules of the same substance at a distance. A permanent magnet brought into a room will throw any surrounding iron into a condition similar to its own; and here the medium of communication is unknown, though the fact is undisputed. Similarly, we may conceive, if we please, that the vibration of molecules of brain-stuff may be communicated to an intervening medium, and so pass under certain circumstances from one brain to another, with a corresponding simultaneity of impressions. No more than in the case of the magnetic phenomena is any investigator bound to determine the *medium* before inquiring into the *fact* of transit. On the other hand, the possibility must not be overlooked that further advances along the lines of research here indicated may necessitate a modification of that general view of the relation of mind to matter to which modern science has long been gravitating."

DARK PUBLIC CIRCLES.

As announced last month, my paper entitled "The Law of Deterioration as applied to Spiritual Phenomena: with Suggestions for the Abolition of Dark Public Circles," was read before the Central Association of Spiritualists at 38 Great Russell Street on Monday evening, June 26th. The paper appears *in extenso* in *Light* for July 1st. As, however, the subject was first introduced by some remarks I made in my "Notes and Comments" last month, I feel it will not be out of place to give briefly the salient points of the paper in this magazine. I therefore do so reserving my remarks on certain objec-

tions raised in the discussion which followed for another occasion. The following extracts will show the general scope of what I said :—

“Spiritual phenomena have not stood their ground by being offered up on the shrine of credulity and superstition ; but only so far as their basis was established by a stern and rigid conformity to the dictates of reason and an unflinching honesty of purpose shown on the part of those who sought them. Just in the ratio that Spiritualists have adopted these methods has the movement gained ground, and become acceptable to earnest seekers after truth. The progress has been slow ; at one time scarcely apparent, at others seemingly retrograde ; nevertheless, it has been sure. Adopting this method, marvels and wonders may become conspicuous only by their absence ; the worthies of the past may no more return to spout their bad grammar and worse sense ; but we shall at least have the genuine satisfaction of knowing that the facts we are able to present to the world are so many solid and reliable additions to the science which deals with (1) Man as a spiritual being ; (2) the existence of a Spiritual world, and (3) the duality and the continuity of life.

“It is in this spirit that I desire to draw attention to a question, which, perhaps more than any other, is calling for attention. Its scope is but partially indicated in the title I have given to this paper, for it is intimately associated with the whole question of mediumship. I can, therefore, only hope to glance briefly at a few of the more salient points which occur to me, as I cannot pretend, in the present circumstances, to consider fully a question that would require a volume, if treated according to its merits.”

“Spiritualism as a science is yet young, and notwithstanding much that is frivolous, repulsive, and disheartening, there is, as I have said, a solid substratum of undeniable facts which have been elicited in the same way as the facts of any other physical science. It is, therefore, I think, a matter for congratulation, that after making due allowance for mistakes and exaggerations—unavoidable with those who are seeking in what are practically untried paths—there remains so much to us of sterling value. No other branch of human knowledge and inquiry has, at a corresponding period of its career, been able to exhibit such a clean bill of health ; and if we have met with shadows and disappointments in our research—if many of our conclusions have been unsatisfactory, and our methods of inquiry inadequate, these are but the natural outcome of an exploration which only begins where physical science ends. While admitting this, however, I take it for granted that we are all agreed on the necessity of at once making backward tracks when once such a course is shown to be necessary. Such a reconsideration of method, it appears to me, is apparently essentially necessary with regard to the lines of investigation adopted

in circles to which the public are not only admitted, but in many cases counselled to go, in order to satisfy their curiosity, reasonable or otherwise, as to the truth of Spiritualism."

"It is, I think, an open question whether anyone has ever been convinced of the reality of the phenomena by what has taken place at absolutely dark circles. If conviction has resulted, it has only been after a long and weary investigation, for which few have inclination, and fewer still time and opportunity. Yet it is to these dark and cabinet circles that most inquirers and investigators are introduced. Can we, in these circumstances, wonder that the observer refuses to believe, in the absence of better evidence, that what takes place is *not* the work of the medium? Is not the waning interest and consequent falling away of many who were at first interested in, and attracted to, the subject an inevitable result of the almost utter impossibility of witnessing the phenomena under anything like satisfactory conditions? The very means taken for convincing sceptics in these circles—what has facetiously been termed the 'bolt and bar and sticking plaster' method of investigation—are notoriously ineffective. In very few cases is the desired end attained even after prolonged experience, while irreparable harm is worked in the public estimation against Spiritualism generally by reason of its verdict on what really is no fair representation of the subject, but which, nevertheless, is the only phase brought to their notice. The very first essentials of accurate observation, and of candour and honesty are wanting. In the absence of light or in the seclusion of the medium from view, it is hardly to be expected that the doubter will believe that phenomena which do take place, or forms that appear are not either the work of, or the medium himself in spite of denials to the contrary. Naturally, he prefers the evidence of his own senses, even though he may have carefully searched the premises and assisted in securing and binding the medium with his own hands. To his mind, the whole thing appears more or less a conjuring trick, and that often a very weak one. The conditions under which he observes all tend to suggest a doubt as to whether what takes place is fair and above board. The suspicion will creep in; more must be seen, and more and more, and after all, few can say that in the long run satisfactory results have been forthcoming."

"Let me pass, however, to higher ground. Are these dark séances at all like the ideal which many of us have in view when we seek 'an hour's communion with the dead'? This ideal is no illusion; it has been implanted by records of, in the main, private séances—in the family circle, where Spiritualism is seen at its best. But the divergence between the two is so great that one might almost be excused the thought that the one had no connection with the other. Of course, no well-informed inquirer expects in a public circle the sanctity and holy sense of communion which we naturally and rightly look for

in private, but were the same rules observed as far as practicable in the one case as have generally obtained in the other in bygone days, there would not be such a widely different result. Private mediums, moreover, are falling victims to this state of affairs, the one re-acting upon the other. It is hardly surprising that as the old generation of mediums—those who remember the early days of the movement—pass away, those that succeed them should tend more and more to follow the same lines as have been presented to them in public séances."

"Considering all this, are we not bound to confess that our critics, who laugh to scorn the idea of departed friends coming in such questionable guise and under such apparently conjurer's show conditions, have much of reason in their criticism. Let us look at the matter fairly and squarely and consider the question for a moment with the eyes of an outsider going for the first time to an ordinary public circle. In doing so we may revive memories of our own introduction which, from various reasons, have given way to mature knowledge. And mature knowledge, it may be argued, will work the cure in other cases, but it must be remembered that we who have passed the Rubicon and surmounted the difficulties in the way of a right and true understanding of what Spiritualism really means and is, are but as units to hundreds who have fared very differently and retired either in disgust or despair."

"An inquirer wishes to see something of Spiritual phenomena, of which he has heard much, and perhaps read a little. He is drawn to the subject, as many are, by a desire to learn something of those loved ones who have passed out of his life, leaving behind nothing but a weary and aching void. He yearns for knowledge where faith has failed, notwithstanding the 'sure and certain hope of a joyful re-union'—for an assurance based on demonstrable fact, that the grave does not hold within its compass the brightest, and best, and dearest hopes of his kind. A speculative belief in immortality fails to satisfy his soul's deepest need—he requires palpable demonstration by well attested facts, and a real and living communion with those who have passed beyond the bounds of time. This he has read, or been told, Spiritualism supplies, and he says, 'Show me the proofs of what you say, let me hear their voices, clasp their hands, behold their forms, and enjoy the same sweet communion as of yore.' What takes place? The doors are fast locked, the merest glimmer of light of day or night is scrupulously excluded, and in a contaminated atmosphere he is initiated into the Holy of Holies of—a Spiritualistic farce; or as it has often been described, a veritable witches' frolic. Everything said and done reminds him of a very second-rate Punch and Judy show, with a heavy man and comic business thrown in. What *can* he think of it? How did you or I regard the interminable small talk, bald platitudes,

and weak, very weak jokes? Is it at all strange that, having regard to the suspicious conditions under which the phenomena take place, he should either throw up the whole thing in disgust, or endorse the popular estimate of Spiritualists as being either fools, dupes, or duped?"

"But, it may be argued, such an one has not been properly advised if he goes to a public séance expecting to obtain personal communications from his friends. Perhaps not, but in many cases there is no opportunity for receiving preparatory warning or counsel, and Spiritualism is judged by what they see of it under the only circumstances open to them. And even supposing he does try in his own house, the pattern method of investigation set before him is closely followed in all its objectionable details, only to end with similar results. The darkness, cabinets, and other paraphernalia are imitated, and the *private* circle gets infested with a low order of intelligence, with all the consequent deterioration. Unsatisfactory public circles are often the vestibules to equally objectionable private ones."

"It is also instructive to compare the present state of affairs with those current in the early days of the movement before the innovation of cabinets and total darkness. It is difficult to say when these practices first began to find favour. . . . For the sake of curiosity I have recently gone through a file of the earlier volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine* and taking, say one hundred séances, I have found it distinctly stated in ninety cases that the light was good, either of twilight, moonlight, gas, candles, or blazing fire—at all events sufficient to enable accurate observation, the medium generally being allowed to lie upon a sofa in full view of the company. In five cases nothing is stated as to the light, and the other five took place in the dark. In addition to twilight, or moonlight, or both, gas and candles, or the firelight were also utilised, so that no cause of complaint as to the amount of light can be fairly urged. Windows too were often left open, allowing the sweet evening air to ventilate the room—very different to something I have witnessed during late years where, in addition to every crevice and cranny through which a ray of light could come being blocked, the atmosphere has been poisoned by water being thrown upon a blazing fire in order to quench it, and I verily believe that half a nod would have caused the chimney to be blockaded also. And then it was expected that Spirits with any shred of self-respect would come and visit that séance! I mentally congratulated myself that I was not a Spirit out of the form, and expected to endure such indignities. The statistics I have quoted show that good light, free ventilation, and medium in full view were the rule, and the contrary the exception."

"Moreover, grave dangers attend our present methods—dangers to which we have no right to expose ourselves, and far less our me-

diums. The benefits which would accrue on the score of health, temper and self-respect, were mediums to set themselves to obtain phenomena under the higher conditions, need no special indication. It is notorious that dark séances attract a class of intelligence of a very low order, almost destitute of moral consciousness, and we have high authority for asserting that a man cannot touch pitch and not be defiled. I should also like to see more fully ventilated as to how far the health and vitality of mediums is sapped by this element of darkness. Indications are not wanting in this direction, and it surely behoves us to consider calmly such evidence. 'M. A. (Oxon.),' than whom we have no abler exponent of Spiritualism, has often insisted that we have no right whatever to place ourselves in relation to intelligences that have done so much to bring bewilderment on what is known to the public as Spiritualism, and in the last number of 'LIGHT' he again urges this question for careful and thoughtful consideration, and very forcibly says that the question as to how far we are justified in exposing a medium to such risk by our foolish methods, and for the gratification of idle curiosity, admits in the sight of God and at the bar of conscience of only one answer. I cordially agree with all this, and would, in reiterating his closing words, earnestly press home the warning, counsel, and prediction, which they involve. He says—'The first step will be taken to a better and nobler epoch when we revise our methods, purify our own selves, and discountenance those conditions which divide and harbour fraud, buffoonery, and delusion, which sap the health of mediums, and expose them to unknown perils and the cause of Spiritualism to merited obloquy and contempt.' I cannot hope to put the case in a stronger light than this."

"It is well-known that particular kinds of manifestations, if cultivated continuously, can usually be produced with tolerable certainty, oftentimes notwithstanding antagonistic influences. It seems apparent, therefore, that with cultivation, or development, the higher conditions would serve equally well. At any rate, I see no reason to doubt that what has occurred once may do so again and again. Strangely enough, too, the Spirit known as 'John King' once said* that one of the manifestations of the future would be to permit the medium to lie upon a sofa, in subdued light, in full view of the observers, and that he ('John King') after some little practice would make himself visible hovering over him. That is, a return would be made to the plan adopted in the early days of the movement. The statement is very suggestive, and the sooner this takes place the better."

"I need, I think, say but little more. If my case is made out these suggestions need no further argument. Our first work is obviously to endeavour to strip Spiritualism of all that is fraudulent,

* See *Spiritualist*, May 11th, 1877.

or questionable, or insincere, from whatever source it may come, and if the course suggested will facilitate this there is no doubt that it will commend itself to all truth-loving Spiritualists. The question we have to settle is whether the proposed action will tend to this end. That there are grave difficulties to surmount I readily admit, but I do not believe them to be insuperable; that wise discretion is necessary is also certain, but can we not combine with this our desire to rule out not only fraud itself, but the causes which lead to deceit?"

"As regards the position of mediums in this matter, the transition period will naturally be a trying one. They will need all the support and encouragement they can get. Still, freedom from suspicion, increased self-respect, and better health are advantages worth striving for, apart from any moral considerations connected with the subject. All, even those of approved power and hitherto untarnished honesty, will do well to ponder these things. Many once as free from suspicion have fallen through the subtle influence exerted by this state of affairs."

"After all, it resolves itself into a question of demand and supply. Spiritualists are jointly and severally responsible for, just as much as it rests with them whether the existing conditions of things is remedied. So long as dark séances and cabinet circles are asked for, so long will they exist; if discountenanced, they will soon die a natural death."

The chief motives which induce spirits to communicate with men appear to be a benevolent desire to convince us, past doubt and denial, that there is a world to come; now and then the attraction of unpleasant memories, such as murder or suicide; sometimes (in the worldly-minded) the earth-binding influence of cumber and trouble; but far more frequently the divine impulse of human affection, seeking the good of the loved ones it has left behind, and at times drawn down, perhaps, by their yearning cries.

Under unfavourable or imperfect conditions, spiritual communications, how honestly reported soever, often prove vapid and valueless; and this chiefly happens when communications are too assiduously sought, or continuously persisted in; brief volunteering messages being the most trustworthy. Imprudence, inexperience, supineness, or the idiosyncrasy of the recipient may occasionally result in arbitrary control by spirits of a low order; as men here sometimes yield to the infatuation exerted by evil associates. Or, again, there may be exerted by the inquirer, especially if dogmatic and self-willed, a dominating influence over the medium, so strong as to produce effects that might be readily mistaken for what has been called possession. As a general rule, however, any person of general intelligence and ordinary will can, in either case, cast off such mischievous control; or, if the weak or incautious give way, one who may not improperly be called an exorcist—if possessed of strong magnetic will, moved by benevolence, and, it may be, aided by prayer, can usually rid, or at least assist to rid, the sensitive from such abnormal influence.—ROBERT DALE OWEN.